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# The Public Opinion Quarterly

SCHOOL OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS, PRINCETON UNIVERSITY

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# FOREWORD

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A new situation has arisen throughout the world, created by the spread of literacy among the people and the miraculous improvement of the means of communication. Always the opinions of relatively small publics have been a prime force in political life, but now, for the first time in history, we are confronted nearly everywhere by *mass* opinion as the final determinant of political, and economic, action. Today public opinion operates in quite new dimensions and with new intensities; its surging impact upon events becomes the characteristic of the current age—and its ruin or salvation?

For some time the phenomena of public opinion have been an object of scholarly attention. The quantity of published material dealing with the subject has increased tremendously since the early writings of Alexis de Tocqueville, James Bryce, Albert V. Dicey, Wilhelm Bauer, Ferdinand Tönnies, and A. Lawrence Lowell. A recently published bibliography of public opinion studies lists more than five thousand titles; but the attack has not much more than begun. Scholarship is developing new possibilities of scientific approach as a means of verifying hypotheses and of introducing greater precision of thought and treatment.

Meantime practical exigencies created by the mounting power and activity of mass opinion have constrained the agencies of government to set up special offices for contact with the press and to give increasing attention to their direct relations with the public. Today no important executive branch is without its press bureau under one name or another. Senators and congressmen must maintain sizeable staffs to handle their correspondence with great numbers of constituents. Private polls are taken on public questions. The fate of representative government grows uncertain. Lobbies have

become almost a part of government. Governments have their ministries of propaganda.

Business has been similarly affected. In the case of large enterprises, the manufacturer can no longer concern himself solely with manufacturing nor the merchant with merchandising in a narrow sense. A wide and active public must be dealt with. Advertising becomes a science and an art. Beyond advertising, business finds it necessary to retain expert counsel on the questions of its general relations with the public, and these counsellors grow influential in the general conduct of business affairs.

More than ever the press must be reckoned the Fourth Estate, but two new agencies of mass impression—the radio and motion picture—have appeared. The radio facilitates still further the spread of news and opinion, overleaping boundaries, creating new personal contacts, and raising difficult problems of private editorship and governmental control. Motion picture and radio alike stamp the mind with vivid flashes, and the full educational effect of this bombardment has yet to be experienced.

Under these conditions the clearest possible understanding of what public opinion is, how it generates, and how it acts becomes a vital need touching both public and private interest. The editorial staff of *THE PUBLIC OPINION QUARTERLY* undertakes to serve that need by creating a convenient medium for regularly bringing together from all the sources indicated above—scholarship, government, business, advertising, public relations, press, radio, motion pictures—the latest available information on the phenomena and problems of public opinion and the developing thought, in connection with those phenomena and problems, of scholars, governmental officials, business men, public relations counsel, and the rest.

Of course the most active and intense interest in public opinion is usually displayed by political leaders, group leaders, advertisers, and others who wish to promote some cause—who have objectives the carrying out of which necessitates the cooperation of many minds. *THE PUBLIC OPINION QUARTERLY* will not attempt the delicate task of evaluating these proffered causes or of discovering new ones. It will seek rather to satisfy the need of students and leaders of opinion, irrespective of their social, economic, religious, and political beliefs, for more precise information regarding the phenomena of public opinion itself. The editors will endeavor to maintain a wholly objective and scientific point of view.

The editors will not restrict their effort to publishing the data and ideas which become available as the result of existing research activities. In addition they will survey continuously the field of public-opinion problems, seek

out where new research might be useful, and actively promote that research. In this the editorial staff will have the support of the School of Public Affairs at Princeton and of the other institutions with which its several members are connected.

The QUARTERLY does not yet have at its disposal a specially trained corps of research workers. For the present it must rely in very large part upon voluntary assistance in bringing together the vast amount of material on the subject of public opinion which is scattered throughout the academic laboratories of the country and filed away in the offices or minds of those whose personal experience gives them special knowledge of the subject. The success of the QUARTERLY will depend in part upon the extent and quality of this voluntary cooperation.

The editors undertake to make the QUARTERLY a clearing house of information and a meeting ground of thought for all interested in public opinion; to gather and systematize the relevant data; and, as the means become available, to promote and direct specific researches. They expect that their activities will contribute substantially to the more enlightened comprehension of a controlling (but) obscure force.

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The editorial staff wishes to express at this time grateful appreciation of the generous assistance given by many during the launching of the venture. Until the QUARTERLY can support itself from subscriptions and advertising it will owe its existence to the generosity of those whose contributions have made possible the establishment of an underwriting fund, and to Princeton University and the School of Public Affairs in particular, for assuming a large part of the editorial costs. Although the editorial staff shares the financial responsibility with numerous friends, its members realize that they cannot place upon others the burden of editorial guidance and enterprise. Upon them alone rests the responsibility for editorial policy and the charting of an emerging program of public-opinion research.

THE EDITORS

*The present design and format are the contribution  
of Mr. Heyworth Campbell in collaboration with  
Mr. H. N. Weinert of the Princeton University Press.*



# TOWARD A SCIENCE OF PUBLIC OPINION

By FLOYD H. ALLPORT ] out

Since 1924 Dr. Allport (Harvard University, A.B. 1913; Ph.D. 1919) has been Professor of Social and Political Psychology at Syracuse University. From 1921 to 1924 he was acting editor of the *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*; has served on the governing boards of the Social Science Research Council (1925-27-29-31), and the American Psychological Association (1928-30). In addition to numerous articles in psychological periodicals he is the author of *Social Psychology* and *Institutional Behavior*. out

Literature and popular usage with reference to public opinion contain many conceptions which impede clear thinking. These notions are drawn from analogies, personifications, and other figures of speech and are employed for journalistic terseness, for the purpose of arousing vivid imagery, or to conceal the emotional bias of the particular writer. They are so widespread in their use and are regarded with so much respect, even in textbooks of political and social science, that their reexamination is necessary as a first step in formulating a workable, scientific approach. start (includes title alone)

## FICTIONS AND BLIND ALLEYS ] out

1. *The Personification of Public Opinion*. Public opinion, according to this fiction, is thought of as some kind of being which dwells in or above the group, and there expresses its view upon various issues as they arise. The "voice of public opinion," or the "public conscience," are metaphors of this sort. The fiction arises through thinking of an expression given by a "group" at one time and another expression given by the same group at another time, and then assuming a continuity of some sort of soul principle between the two expressions. It might be said, for example, that public opinion in 1830 favored slavery, but in 1930 opposed it; and the *daemon* of the group is thus thought of as changing its mind. When viewed from the descriptive standpoint of science, this fiction, of course, disappears, and we find only groupings of specific individuals with a certain common agreement among them at one time and a different sort of agreement at another time. Though misleading from the standpoint of research, this fiction may have arisen partly from a wholly genuine situation. A certain psychological continuity

does exist in the fact that there are established in individuals, over a period of time, a number of habitual ideas, traditions, customs, and formulations of past experience, in short, a "reservoir" of accepted beliefs and practices, upon the basis of which many current issues are decided. The error, however, consists in thinking that these habitual, neural dispositions in individuals make up collectively a soul or being called "public opinion," which contemplates and decides upon public issues as they appear.

2. *The Personification of the Public.* A related fiction is one in which the notion of a collective, super-organic being is applied not to the opinion process itself, but to the public which "holds it." A personified "Public" is spoken of as turning its gaze, now this way, now that, as deciding, and as uttering its opinion. One of the effects of this loose, journalistic manner of writing is that, since "the public" is here not an explicitly denotable reality, but a metaphor, any kind of opinion may be attributed to it without the possibility of checking the assertion.

3. *The Group Fallacy of the Public.* Somewhat less mystical, but equally uncritical, is the usage of those who renounce the idea of a collective entity or group mind, holding that when they say "the public" they mean *individuals*; but who, nevertheless, go on employing such phrases as "the public wants so and so," or "the country voted dry." Whether we personify the notion of the public or not, we are likely to commit a fallacy when we use a collective term as the subject of a verb denoting action. For the statement which the verb implies will often be true only of a part of the aggregate concerned. By this sort of terminology, which has also been called the "part-for-the-whole fallacy," one conceals facts concerning minorities which it is the business of research to uncover.

4. *The Fallacy of Partial Inclusion in the Use of the Term "Public."* Applying the foregoing criticism more specifically the question arises, "What do we mean by a *public*?" Is it a population defined by geographical, community, political jurisdiction, or other limits; or is it merely the collection of people, within such an area, who have a common interest? In the first instance the term is *totally inclusive*, that is, it is employed to include *all* of *each* individual in the area, his body, his physiological processes and needs, as well as his various opinions and reactions. This usage, however, is not common because it is too complete; it includes so much that the categories of social scientists and leaders cannot be intelligently used in dealing with it. We cannot speak of *the* opinion of this public, because it includes too many alignments of opinion, many of which may be irrelevant or even contradictory.



The second meaning of the term public is usually, therefore, the one intended. This meaning is made up, not of entire individuals, but of an abstraction of a specific interest (or set of interests) common to a certain number within the population. Those who have such a common interest are said to constitute a "public." We may call this usage of the term public one of *partial inclusion*. Now let us suppose that the individuals having this particular interest (that is, comprising a public from the partially inclusive standpoint) are not also members of some other partially inclusive public. That is, let us suppose their public does not overlap with any other public. If we conceive opinion to go with interest, as is likely on important issues, this public becomes coterminous with the spread of an opinion upon certain issues. The public, in other words, would be defined as the number of people holding a certain opinion, and the people holding that opinion would be identified as those belonging to that public. The definition of the term public would thus be circular. The term public, as a partially inclusive phenomenon, would thus be found superfluous for the purpose of research, and the problem would be reduced directly to the task of discovering where and in what degree these alignments of individuals having similar opinions exist among the population concerned.

Now let us suppose, on the other hand, that the publics overlap, that is, that an individual may belong simultaneously in two or more groupings because of different opinions or interests he possesses on different issues. In such a case if we try to state, or discover by a canvass, the opinion of a certain partially inclusive grouping (a "public"), we might not know where a certain individual should be placed. Since he is in two groupings, he may have attitudes which tend to contradict each other on certain questions. One of these attitudes must be suppressed in favor of the other. If we place him arbitrarily in one of the publics we may be misjudging which attitude is dominant, thus producing a false result. If we place him in *both*, we count him twice, or perhaps have him cancelling himself, both of which consequences are absurd. With terminology such as this it becomes impossible to define our problem, or to discover our empirical units of study. Opinions are reactions of individuals; they cannot be allocated to publics without becoming ambiguous and unintelligible for research.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Professor Dewey has recognized this confusion in the notion of a public and its result in connection with our difficulties in dealing with public problems. (See Dewey, *The Public and Its Problems*.) For further discussion of this point and of Professor Dewey's position, see F. H. Allport, *Institutional Behavior*, Essay V. For a further reference to "total and partial inclusion" in their bearing upon method in social science, see F. H. Allport, "Group and Institution as Concepts in a Natural Science of Social Phenomena," *Publications of the American Sociological Society*, Vol. XXII, pp. 83-99.



5. *The Fiction of an Ideational Entity.* Another non-scientific way of speaking about public opinion, sometimes encountered in popular usage and even in the literature, represents the opinion content as a kind of essence which, like a Platonic "idea," is distributed into the minds of all those who endorse it. The expression that a certain opinion is "public" illustrates this usage.

6. *The Group-Product, or "Emergent," Theory.* We now come to formulations which refer not to personifications or agencies, but to results. Public opinion in this sense is regarded as a new product emerging from integrated discussion in a group, a product of concerted individual thinking which is different both from an average or consensus of views and from the opinion of any particular individual.<sup>2</sup> A variant of this definition is that which describes public opinion as "a step on the way toward social decision, a sort of gathering point of the social will in its organization toward action."<sup>3</sup> This fiction will be discussed in connection with the one following.

7. *The Eulogistic Theory.* Those who are inclined to regard public opinion as the emergent result of group discussion usually carry the implications of their theory farther, viewing this result not only as different from the products of minds working individually, but as superior in character. In the process of interaction errors are thought to be weeded out so that the opinion of the more enlightened, improved by discussion, will in the end prevail. Public opinion is thus considered not as a segment of behavior common to the many, but as a single ideational product of interacting and creative personalities.<sup>4</sup>

The criticism of the emergent and eulogistic theories calls for some careful distinctions. It is granted at the outset that when one individual enters into a discussion with others he often reaches conclusions which are different from any conclusion he would have arrived at through solitary reflection. The assumption which we should guard against, as unworkable in scientific methodology, is that this emergent product is something floating out, as it were, in space, and belongs to a group mind rather than to individuals' reactions. Argument A must be related to argument B and argument C in a particular individual's thinking. A cannot be in one individual's mind, B in another's, and so on, and produce any emergent that can be known to human intelligence. The emergent product must be expressed by some

<sup>2</sup> See Krueger and Reckless, *Social Psychology*, pp. 127, 266, and Gault, R. H., *Social Psychology*, pp. 176-77.

<sup>3</sup> See the definition cited by J. K. Folsom, *Social Psychology*, p. 446, and Chapter IX of that work.

<sup>4</sup> See R. H. Gault, *op. cit.*

*individuals* or we cannot know it at all; and if it *is* expressed by some individual, it becomes difficult to show just how much the influence of integrated discussion has helped to form it. For no matter what common result individuals have reached through discussion with others, when they put that conclusion forward in overt action, in voting, for example, they are expressing not only what they *think*, but what they *want*. So-called "group thinking" may have taken place in individuals, as we have shown; but in the arena of practical affairs it is *individuals* who do things and not the integrated product of group thought. It may be that the individuals are acting *in accordance with* group thinking; but in large alignments of opinion this may be difficult to establish since it is so difficult to know what the content of this emergent opinion is.

We must realize, of course, that the questions which make up the content of public-opinion phenomena are usually not questions of ascertainable fact, but of *opinion*. There is, in such instances, no way of knowing whether the product of the interaction of individuals is of a higher or a lower order so far as truth, or even value, is concerned. Such interaction does bring out the issues more definitely, and it shows more clearly how the individuals are aligning upon different sides. In other words, it gives a clearer picture of what the individuals *want*. This result, however, does not necessarily constitute an intelligent solution of the problem. Such a solution can be known to have been reached only when time and experiment have given us some basis upon which to judge; when, in other words, the issue has become to some extent a question of fact. When this time arrives it is probable that the emergent product will be the result not of group deliberation alone, but of a considerable amount of overt experimentation as well.<sup>5</sup>

We are not denying the possibility that a superior product of group interaction may exist. We are merely saying that, if there is such an emergent product, we do not know where it is, how it can be discovered, identified or tested, or what the standards are by which its value may be judged. Though not discredited in the realm of possible abstract truth, theories of this sort seem to be blind alleys so far as a scientific treatment of the problem

<sup>5</sup> For an account of some of the effects of group discussion upon accuracy of opinion, and of the theory involved, see an account by the present writer in Achilles, P. S., *Psychology at Work*, pp. 214-18; also Jenness, Arthur, "Social Influences in the Change of Opinion," *Jn. of Abn. and Soc. Psych.*, 1932, 27, 29-34, and "The Rôle of Discussion in Changing Opinion Regarding a Matter of Fact," *Jn. of Abn. and Soc. Psych.*, 1932, 27, 279-96.

is concerned. Writers who have stressed them have perhaps been thinking of small, totally inclusive rural or pioneer communities where adjustment to nature and to one's fellow men is direct, and where the common, integrated opinion is practically synonymous with the common life; or else they may have been thinking of discussion groups in which a deliberate attempt is made to reach a result satisfactory to the wishes and judgment of all participating. In our modern vast and growing urban populations, complex in composition and organization, where face-to-face contacts of whole personalities are giving way to occupational and other groupings, it is doubtful how much real integrative effect does take place in an individual's ideas through discussion with others. Some occurs, no doubt; but it is probably mingled with the effects of emotional conditioning, with susceptibility to stereotypes, symbols, and "straddle-terms" of political leaders, as well as an undeviating regard for one's own individual interests. In any case the view that public opinion is a product of group thinking superior to the thinking of individuals and effective as a kind of super-individual group will or judgment is a scientifically sterile notion. This theory, like the others we have discussed, may be motivated by the desire of publicists for the support of a kind of "social providence" for their acts. Though comfortably optimistic, the emergent and eulogistic theories may lull us into a sense of false security in which the need for research and for facts regarding attitudes and control processes is in danger of being forgotten.

8. *The Confusion of Public Opinion with the Public Presentation of Opinion.* (*The Journalistic Fallacy.*) The preceding discussion has dealt with theories of the nature of public opinion itself. There should be added to these a common fallacy concerning the criterion by which a given opinion content should be regarded as "public" (that is, as widely accepted). This is the illusion that the item which one sees represented in print as "public opinion," or which one hears in speeches or radio broadcasts as "public information" or "public sentiment," really has this character of widespread importance and endorsement. This naïve error has been fostered by review and digest journals, and by surveys urging popular or legislative action, in which evidence presented concerning "public opinion" has consisted of news-item and editorial clippings from different sections of the country. The lack of statistical foundation, or of studies relating this material to the actual lay of attitudes in the population, is so obvious that further comment is unnecessary.

*And here*

## COMMON AGREEMENTS AND SOME PROPOSED DISTINCTIONS

Notwithstanding these many futile characterizations of public opinion, there appear certain points of common agreement in the work of various scholars which may prove useful in guiding us past the blind alleys and setting us upon the proper road. These points of agreement the writer ventures to restate in his own way and to add a few other distinctions which, he believes, have value for research. The phenomena to be studied under the term public opinion are essentially *instances of behavior* of which the following conditions are true.

- a. They are behaviors of human *individuals*.
- b. They involve *verbalization*.
- c. They are performed (or the words are expressed) by *many individuals*.
- d. They are stimulated by and directed toward some *universally known object or situation*.
- e. The object or situation they are concerned with is *important to many*.
- f. They represent *action or readiness for action* in the nature of *approval or disapproval* of the common object.
- g. They are frequently performed with an *awareness* that *others are reacting to the same situation* in a similar manner.
- h. The attitudes or opinions they involve are *expressed* or, at least, the individuals are in readiness to express them.
- i. The individuals performing these behaviors, or set to perform them, may or may not be in one another's presence. (Public-opinion situation in relation to crowd.)
- j. They may involve verbal contents of both *permanent* and *transitory* character, constituting "genetic groundwork material" and "*present alignment*," respectively.
- k. They are in the nature of *present efforts to oppose or accomplish something*, rather than long-standing conformities of behavior. (Public opinion phenomena contrasted with law and custom.)
- l. Being efforts toward common objectives, they frequently *have the character of conflict* between individuals aligned upon *opposing sides*.
- m. They are sufficiently strong and numerous, as common behaviors, to give rise to the *probability that they may be effective* in attaining their objective.

These points of common agreement require some comment. Item (a), stating that the content of the phenomenon must be conceived as related to the actual *behavior of individuals*, is self-evident. It cannot be merely an invention, for example, of a journalist purporting to represent actual behaviors of acceptance. As for item (c), "*many individuals*," the specific number or proportion necessary cannot be stated, since it will vary with the situation. The number required to produce an effect toward the objective (m) must be considered in this connection.

(b) *Verbalization*. The common stimulating object or situation must be something that can be expressed in words; it must be capable of being immediately and clearly named. There can be no such thing as opinion without stating the content of the opinion in language form. The *response* of individuals to this common stimulating situation may be either verbal or non-verbal. It may, for example, be a grimace, gesture, or emotional expression. This reaction, however, must be *capable* of being readily translated into words, such, for example, as expressions of agreement or approval.

(d) *Common Stimulating Object*. The object or situation toward which the individuals' responses are directed must be clearly understood, and within the experience of all. It must be sufficiently limited to be related to a definite proposal for action. It could not be, for example, the general subject of taxation; but it might be the proposal of some particular tax law. Properly speaking, public opinion does not exist about the nature of the deity, though it might well exist with regard to spoken violations of accepted theological creeds.

(e) The common stimulating situation must not only be well known; it must be a *matter of universal importance*. Mere interest is not enough; the situation must touch upon fundamental needs or desires. The hazards of a man ascending in a stratosphere balloon arouse widespread interest, but they could not ordinarily be called matters of public opinion, since they are not important to many. A government policy of building military aircraft for "national defense," however, might well become a matter of public opinion.

(f) *Readiness for Approval or Disapproval*. The responses aroused or prepared in the individuals must be in the nature of active liking or disliking, of support or opposition. For example, the common knowledge of the various methods by which the sale of alcoholic liquors may be controlled, and of the relative advantages of these methods, does not belong in the category of public opinion unless such knowledge is connected with the widespread favoring or opposing of some particular method.

(g) *Awareness of Others Reacting*. A number of writers have maintained that public-opinion phenomena involve a "consciousness of kind" in the individuals holding or expressing the accepted view. It may make a considerable difference in one's behavior, in supporting or opposing a particular measure, if he is aware, or even if he imagines, that others are reacting in the same manner.<sup>6</sup> Although this "impression of universality" is an impor-

<sup>6</sup> For a discussion of this phenomenon see F. H. Allport, *Social Psychology*, pp. 305-7.



tant part of the opinion process, it is perhaps best not to require it as an essential element in every opinion alignment to be studied. Otherwise important phases of the problem may be overlooked, such, for example, as the distribution of opinions existing at the first moment the common proposal or stimulating object appears, and before people have had a chance to become aware of, or concerned about, the reactions of others.

(h) *Opinions Expressed*. If item (g), the effect of the opinions of others, be accepted as an important phase of public-opinion phenomena, the corollary follows that the individual's opinions must be outwardly expressed, or at least capable of being readily elicited. As shown by the work of Dr. Richard Schanck, it makes a decided difference in how one feels or thinks, whether the opinion is one that the individual readily expresses or acknowledges to others, or is his own personal and private view. Dr. Schanck has called these two types of reaction "public" and "private attitudes," respectively.<sup>7</sup> To a publicist, the unexpressed opinion is usually unimportant since it does not represent a recognizable alignment. It is not his concern what the reasons of different personalities for holding or not holding certain common opinions may be. The fact of common acceptance or rejection is alone significant. From the scientific standpoint, however, although we recognize that a public-opinion phenomenon requires expression of opinions, we cannot neglect the field of private attitudes. In the long run, the existence of a widespread similarity of unexpressed private attitudes may be highly important, and should be discovered and measured by our techniques. Consider, for example, the potential importance of the opinion which great numbers of Germans or Italians may have about their rulers, but do not dare reveal.

(i) *Relation to Presence or Absence of Others*. A number of writers have discussed the difference between a public and a crowd.<sup>8</sup> They seem in general to agree, however, that the phenomena which we call public opinion can occur in either situation. The condition of partial inclusion which we have previously cited as characteristic of the usual definition of a public is recognized by implication in the general agreement that an individual can be in a number of publics at one time, but in only one crowd. Another way to state the matter is to recognize that in either case we have a situation comprising many individuals reacting to a common object or situation, but

<sup>7</sup> Schanck, Richard L., "A Study of a Community and Its Groups and Institutions Conceived of as Behaviors of Individuals," *Psychol. Monographs*, Vol. XLIII, No. 2 (whole No. 195), 1932.

<sup>8</sup> See Krueger and Reckless, *Social Psychology*, p. 266.

under different conditions of association, proximity, stimulation, and response. Where individuals are separated, for example, in their own homes, there is not the possibility of visual, touch, and olfactory sensations from the other individuals which obtains in a crowd situation. Modern radio, however, has brought *auditory* stimulation from others into this segregated domain, as when we "listen in" to the applause of an audience in a political address. This limitation of sensory modes probably has an effect in the lessening of facilitation, or reinforcement, of the responses characteristic of the crowd situation; but it probably does not abolish such reinforcement. In the main, where individuals are reacting in one another's presence, motor responses often have the possibility of being more expressive, overt, vigorous, and direct in their action. In cases where the individuals are separated, the reactions are likely to be more implicit, and can usually become effective only through some symbolic or representative mechanism, or indirect political process, such as voting. For the most part, however, the distinction between crowd-action and public-opinion phenomena seems to be one of degree rather than one of kind.

(j) *Transitory and Permanent Aspects.* In the treatment of public-opinion phenomena writers of one school have stressed the stable and rational character of the content and the aspect of its universal acceptance, while other writers have represented the opinion content as unstable, emotional, opportunistic, subject to propaganda, and divided upon controversial issues.<sup>9</sup> This disagreement can be resolved if we view the phenomenon as a process with a time dimension, in which the older content becomes the stabilized and universal portion, while the more recent content represents the present ever-shifting alignment. We have referred above to what we have figuratively called a "reservoir" of common beliefs, attitudes, and knowledge, which forms a part of the sociologists' "culture pattern." More specifically, these mores of thinking and feeling are merely reactions that can be predicted to occur with greater certainty, both now and in the future, than can other types of reactions. Some of these long-standing behaviors may be of a rational character; or they may be the product of trial-and-error experience on a large scale, as, for example, the doctrine of American isolation or the avoidance of inflation. Others may be equally long-standing and predictable, but more emotional in character, such, for instance, as race prejudices. Now in the process of forming the new align-

<sup>9</sup> One writer has taken note of this contrast by making a distinction between "public" opinion and "preponderant" opinion.



ments, publicity agents employ these universal and long-standing attitudes to secure their immediate ends, their method being that of transferring the old reaction to a new stimulus by the familiar method of the conditioned response. The old response of approaching, withdrawing, rejecting, or struggling is evoked by the old stimulus term, and while it is occurring the new stimulus to which it is desired to transfer it is introduced. The result is the association of the old response, in the future, with the new stimulus.

We now have the suggestion of a solution of the disagreement regarding public-opinion content. The old responses, stable and universally accepted as following upon their original and "rightful" stimuli, still exist in the background. They are the universal, tried, and stable aspect of the opinion. But the fact of their transfer by conditioning to a new stimulus is something new, unstable, opportunistic, and effective among certain portions of the population (who are more biased, more gullible, or more heavily propagandized) but not among others. Hence we have here an explanation of the shifting, irrational, and divided aspect of the public-opinion process.

To take an example of the conditioning process above described, let us consider the doctrine that "All men are created equal." This idea has long been accepted as a part of American mores. Now such an established attitude alone does not satisfy our criteria for public-opinion phenomena, since it does not, of itself, suggest definitive action toward some objective. Nevertheless, it is one of the psychological foundations upon which opinion alignments, which do satisfy our criteria, can be built. In 1776 support for the war against George III was elicited by conditioning the responses of approval aroused by this formula to the proposals for revolutionary action. Thus the older maxim of individual equality was the stable, enduring, and unanimously accepted phase of the phenomenon. Its transfer to the revolutionary cause was the new, opportunistic, and, at first, highly controversial aspect. Between 1830 and 1861 the same reaction of individual equality and liberty was increasingly connected with the argument against slavery; and after the Civil War the reaction against slavery also became a part of the basic mores. In later years the same doctrine (with aversion to slavery added) has been employed to help align individuals toward abolishing compulsory prostitution (white slavery), child labor (child slavery), and undesirable working conditions (wage slavery). In a similar manner (to take another example) a nation-wide inveterate pride in race and culture, combined with a long-standing prejudice against Jews,

are being employed by Hitler as an instrument with which to unify his followers in support of the measures of the Nazi régime.

We may call this body of long-standing, common attitudes which are conditioned to newer situations the *genetic groundwork responses* of public opinion; and in contradistinction we may speak of the consensus of many individuals, induced by transferring these earlier reactions to new stimuli, as the *present alignment*. One of the important problems of research is to discover the groundwork materials of real or potential importance for opinion in a population, and to determine their relation to alignments existing at present or in the process of formation.

(k) *Action toward Present Objective*. The distinction between genetic groundwork and present alignment suggests a further contrast between public-opinion phenomena and another set of long-standing behaviors, namely, those which constitute laws, customs, and traditions. These latter phenomena are perhaps special cases of the genetic groundwork upon which opinion alignments may be built. They differ, however, from the other groundwork in the existence of a steeper mode of conformity resulting from the more vigorous coercion of punishment and public disapproval for those who fail to conform. Usually, however, the opinion phenomenon does not represent a conditioning of the legalized response to a new stimulus, but is a widespread struggle reaction against individuals or proposals which go against the customary or legally prescribed practice. Thus we do not say that a law requiring a householder to shovel the snow from his sidewalk is itself a part of a public-opinion phenomenon, so long as everyone obeys it. It is simply a common and expected practice of citizens. If, however, certain individuals in a neighborhood persistently fail to remove snow from their sidewalks, causing inconvenience and danger to their neighbors, there may arise an alignment of expressed opinion against them. In order to make such an alignment effective the existence of the common practice expected and prescribed as law is likely to be cited. Laws protecting property are not, in themselves, public-opinion situations; but should numerous unpunished burglaries occur in a community within a short time, a condition fulfilling all the criteria of public opinion might speedily arise. Public-opinion phenomena arise when non-conformists openly refuse to treat the national flag with respect, to wear clothes, or to conform with other customs. With regard to laws not established but in prospect, the situation is reversed. It is not now a case of public-opinion phenomena arising against those who violate expected or legal practice, but of the new law being championed or opposed according as it conforms or does violence to previously existing

groundwork (or can be made to appear to do so). An example of this relationship is afforded by the passing of legislation to prohibit Negroes from teaching in white schools in localities where they were likely to be appointed. Here the genetic groundwork of race prejudice was the response to which the newly proposed law became the conditioning stimulus.

(1) *Relation to Issue and Conflict.* Public-opinion phenomena, as we have seen, are those which involve readiness for action toward some present unattained objective. The common stimulating situation toward which the responses are directed is a plan or policy through which many individuals are trying to get what they want. This being true, situations will often arise in which the individuals are aligned in special-interest groups, members of each side trying to get what they want in opposition to individuals aligned in an opposing group. Opinions upon the two sides in this case are only aspects or symptoms of a more profound and general struggle. They may be only a rationalization of this struggle to secure favor with neutrals or stronger loyalty from adherents in the drive toward the real objective, which is often more biological or prepotent than the formulated opinions of its supporters would suggest. The doctrine of States' Rights, for example, has been used as a rallying symbol for individuals with strong economic interests of various sorts.

We enter here the field of public opinion in relation to pressure politics, class and labor struggles, and social conflicts of every type. It becomes necessary here to transcend the view of the publicist who is usually interested only in one side of the controversy; for the alignment, or piling up in a J-curve of attitude distribution upon one side, is intelligible only in the light of a corresponding steepening upon the other side. In a two-party system of politics each party alignment has its full significance only in view of the opposing party alignment. The entire distribution becomes U-shaped. Strong communistic developments are contemporaneous with strong capitalistic and fascistic alignments; and the one grouping seems to derive its meaning in contrast with the other. The popular notion that these various "isms" arise as political philosophies gaining momentum through indoctrination as they spread is inadequate. These philosophies represent rationalizations of the more powerful factors which lie beneath. They are the verbal aspects of the total concerted struggle behaviors of individuals aligned upon the two sides. They are the verbal part of the techniques which the individuals are using to get what they want in the struggle. In international conflicts, similarly, we should take our public-opinion field as broader than the limits of one country alone. We should think of a

U-shaped distribution of the population of both countries combined; for the shifts of attitude distribution in one of the countries bears a definite, predictable relationship to the shift in the other.

(m) *Probability of Effect.* Our final criterion, that of a probable degree of effectiveness is, from the standpoint of control, the most important of all. In the entire field of the population sampled there will probably be found consensuses of individuals favoring or disfavoring all sorts of common objects, in all ranges of number, intensity of conviction, and effort put forth. A thorough program of research would include the charting of all these consensuses. From a more practical standpoint, however, we shall probably have to choose from all this array the particular alignments in which we are most interested. And in this choice the criterion of selecting those which promise to be in some degree *effective* will probably be found the most useful and natural to employ. In making such a choice the mistake is sometimes made of selecting the alignment which seems to be the largest from the standpoint of numbers of adherents. A careful consideration of the probable effect of a given alignment, in which other factors besides number are taken into account, will help us to make a better selection. There may be many cases in which a large proportion of the people favor some action, but that does not necessarily argue the highest probability of that action being taken. The variable of *intensity*, that is the *degree of feeling*, or the *strenuousness of the effort* which individuals will make toward the common objective, must also be considered. For example, a recent nationwide sample poll on birth control has revealed that a substantial majority of the people are in favor of it. Yet legislative action supporting it has not been generally forthcoming, probably because the desire for it was not sufficiently intense. That is, the need and desire for contraceptive information and help that cannot now be gained by the individual himself is not felt acutely enough by the members of this majority to press for organized action in opposition to a minority who have a very intense feeling upon the other side. Collective results are brought about by enough people holding and expressing opinions, and by their expressing them strongly enough, or acting upon them. The situation must ensure that enough people are intensely enough affected.

Other influences must, of course, be recognized in predicting or understanding the production of effects. The existence of some type of organization for bringing collective action about, and the facility of using such organization, are important. The presence of individuals of outstanding influence and ability to direct the undertaking is another factor. A

third factor is the degree of reenforcement received by each individual through feeling that others have the same attitude as he; and this, in turn, depends upon the ease, quickness, and freedom of communication among the individuals. The channels through which citizens can make known their wishes to authorities must also be taken into account. We must remember also that the process through which the alignment becomes effective is complicated by a circularity of reenforcement. When, for example, an editor pretends in his columns that he is expressing "public opinion," he thereby influences authorities on the one hand and strengthens the alignment among the people on the other. The latter influence increases the popular manifestation of the attitude, with the effect of still further increasing the editor's confidence and aggressiveness in putting forth his editorials as "public opinion."

It is true that these various factors are at present difficult to isolate and measure. To separate them and study the contribution of each to the total effect is one of the problems of the new science of public opinion. For the present we must rely, in the absence of more definite knowledge, upon a practical familiarity with these complex situations. In applying the criterion of effectiveness it is, however, unnecessary to wait until the effect has already been produced. If we waited until that point, we should miss important aspects of the phenomenon as they were taking place. Nor is it necessary to be *certain* that the effect will occur, and that the opinion-alignment we are considering will play a definite part in producing it. It is sufficient that, when we survey the whole situation, there seems to be a probability above chance that this will occur. This, in fact, is the very method which political leaders use in gauging the potential importance for their programs of current opinion-movements in their communities. And although they have only this subjective weighing of the probabilities to count on, nevertheless, if they accept a certain opinion-alignment and act as if it were *going to be* effective, the responses of citizens adhering to that alignment will probably *tend to become* effective or more effective than they were before. Important as the original lay of attitude of individuals may be, we must consider also the *entire control situation*, with the numerous influencing factors we have cited, as a configuration in a multi-individual field. This phase of the problem cannot be overlooked if we are to be able to predict or even to understand effects. In the language of the new topological psychology we seem to be dealing here with vectors of force operating in a social field.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup> It might be argued that, if an alignment of individuals of given numbers and feeling intensity is thus to be regarded as a force in a social situation, the treatment of public



opinion as an entity, a formulation which we have rejected as sterile, becomes valid, and even necessary, as a working principle of research. The attempt to isolate and measure forces in a social field is, however, too new for us to make a final decision about this matter. In addition to the intangible character of the units we must handle in measuring the force of an alignment, there is the further baffling problem of the circular increase in effect. In figuring the stresses upon the pier of a bridge an engineer does not need to figure the pull of gravitation and the force of the current as augmenting one another in a circular manner. If this were true it would render his task of making calculations wellnigh impossible. The situation, however, with human organisms is different. A public official's attitude and program, let us say, are under the influence of the combined "forces" of newspaper publicity and the opinions manifested by individuals at large. But the calculation of these two forces is not an easy problem, because the newspaper appeal, as we have shown, may affect the attitudes of the citizens, and the change thus produced may in turn react the newspaper editor, *this* change again *further* influencing the citizens. And so on ad infinitum. The present writer is inclined to believe that "force" calculations will fail in the multi-individual behavior field, and that we shall have to employ some other type of measuring continua, such as the telic or teleonomic, which have been described elsewhere. In such methods, however, we shall be obliged, as we have indicated, to take into account a field of reciprocally acting units, whether these units be conceived as collective entities or as single human organisms.

But granting that indices of collective alignments of "public opinion" in a social field could be developed (and all efforts in that direction should certainly be encouraged) there is still good reason for us to continue our emphasis upon measurement at the more elementary level, namely, the behaviors of individuals. We must remember that the societal patterns, or *gestalten*, are far less stable than force fields in the physical or biological sciences, by analogy with which the societal configurations are suggested. Voluntaristic action, such as we have in public affairs, is by its very nature subject to unpredictable changes which may alter the functioning of the entire pattern and the force which we assign to its various components. The position of iron particles in a magnetic field, the contributions of various bodily organs and tissues to the entire body metabolism, the rôle of sensory units in the perception of space,—all these are phenomena having a high degree of stability. The pattern of relationships is not affected by any likelihood that these component atoms, molecules, tissues, or sensations might think or feel in a certain way, or connect their old, stable ways of thinking to new issues, or communicate their reactions to the other elements of the pattern, or that it would make any difference in the patterns of magnetism, metabolism, or perception if they did. In the human field, however, the mere fact of individuals thinking or feeling in certain ways, or knowing certain facts about the "pattern" of their actions, profoundly affects that pattern itself. Let us suppose, for example, that it should suddenly become known that, in their own private feelings, the great majority of citizens had long been wishing for a law to be passed depriving the "Supreme Court" of the power of declaring enactments of "Congress" unconstitutional. What a marked readjustment this would bring about in our power field, and how it would alter the "force index" of "nine venerable gentlemen"! In contrast with this instability of the collective force field, we come back to the relative dependability of attitudes in individuals. For this instability of the collective scene is not due to shifts of personal attitudes in the citizens, at least to shifts in the groundwork-reactions of opinion, but to the control methods, political structures, sudden blockings or facilitation of communication, dispelling of "pluralistic ignorance," and the exploiting of group and institutional symbols for shifting purposes. Attitudes of course are not absolutely permanent, not even the groundwork-reactions which have been longer established. They are far more stable, however, than the force indices of the various components in a societal pattern. It is difficult to predict the *power* which, in coming decades, will be accorded to spokesmen either of the working class or of the government-controlled capitalists, or the authority which will be vested in the President, the members of Congress, or the heads of government bureaus. But we can feel fairly certain that the *opinion alignments* which will be most broadly held and most effective in this country will be those of protecting the interests of the "common man," of maintaining homes,

## DEFINING THE "PUBLIC-OPINION SITUATION"

Our discussion of the fictions and blind alleys of method have shown us where the major futilities lie. When we try to find an object corresponding to the term public opinion, that is, when we regard it as an entity or a content to be discovered and then studied or analyzed, our efforts will meet with scant success. But when we distinguish by this term a multi-individual situation, or some of the relationships in such a situation, and then enter this situation and begin to study the explicit materials which it affords, some valuable results may be gained.

The question now arises as to the nature of this "public-opinion situation" and how its characteristic relationships may be recognized. And the answer to this question is to be found in the points of common agreement which we have previously discussed. We are to deal with situations involving word reactions or reactions to words on the part of many individuals, which are directed toward common stimulating situations important to many, these reactions showing readiness to act favorably or unfavorably toward the situation, to be influenced by the awareness of others reacting, to associate older attitudes with present issues, to be directed toward an objective different from the *status quo*, to be frequently related to concerted conflict, and to suggest the likelihood of being effective. Through the use of these criteria we thus find reality and use for the notion of public opinion, while discarding those earlier attempts at formulation which led us off upon the wrong track. We have retained and identified public-opinion phenomena, while at the same time keeping our hands upon the explicitly denotable realities before us, upon behaviors of individuals which can be measured and recorded in the form of statistical distributions. The whole argument may be summarized by the following condensed and somewhat formal statement:

*The term public opinion is given its meaning with reference to a multi-individual situation in which individuals are expressing themselves, or can be called upon to express themselves, as favoring or supporting (or else disfavoring or opposing) some definite condition, person, or proposal of widespread importance, in such a proportion of number, intensity, and constancy, as to give rise to the probability of affecting action, directly or indirectly, toward the object concerned.*

of liquidating public debts, of demanding security for the future, of keeping out of European politics, and of maintaining an adequate national defense.



# STRAW POLLS IN 1936

By ARCHIBALD M. CROSSLEY

After four years as director of research for a Philadelphia advertising agency, Mr. Crossley became director of research for the *Literary Digest*, acting in that capacity for four years. In 1926 he established Crossley, Incorporated, a commercial research organization best known for the Crossley Political Poll and for the Cooperative Analysis of Broadcasting, the latter having received a Harvard prize for outstanding business research. Mr. Crossley is past president of the Market Research Council, past treasurer of the American Marketing Society, and a member of the American Statistical Society.

Two weeks before election I lunched at a downtown New York restaurant with thirteen other men who were conducting or writing about presidential polls. We were the guests of a broker who had sought a consensus of our opinions for the benefit of his clients. During the course of this luncheon we were asked the inevitable question—"Who is going to win?" Seven said Roosevelt, seven said Landon. A list of states was passed around, and we indicated our guess as to how each electoral unit would swing. The result of our predictions showed 273 electoral votes for Landon, seven more than needed for a majority. Two weeks later Roosevelt won 523 out of a possible 531 electoral votes.

The *Literary Digest* had prophesied a Landon victory in 32 states, with 370 electoral votes. The *Farm Journal* had shown a tremendous lead for Landon among farmers. The Autocasters Grass Roots poll showed Landon far ahead. One of the best known and most thoroughly unbiased of political writers had reported the situation so close that a Landon victory appeared possible. At the same time the Gallup poll, the Crossley poll, the *Fortune* survey, betting odds, and a consensus of political writers' opinions showed Roosevelt winning by a landslide. Many people relied implicitly upon the *Literary Digest*. Some applied statistical adjustments and reduced Landon's margin, but still found him convincingly over the necessary 266 electoral votes.

Why was the *Digest* wrong? What was wrong with other polls, and with many experienced observers? Is it possible to sample public opinion sufficiently accurately to forecast an election, particularly a close one? In seeking an answer to this fundamental question, our thinking perhaps will

be clarified if we group the various straw-vote methods into their natural divisions, and consider the reliability of each method.

## DIFFERENCES AMONG THE POLLING METHODS

All the polls were carried on by mail, by personal interview, or by a combination of the two. The personal-interview polls were criticized on the ground that the voter would not desire, or dare, to tell the truth about his vote face to face. The mail polls were criticized on the ground that some classes of voters would respond in greater proportions than others.

Two other major differences of opinion existed. One side argued that the *Literary Digest* could not be wrong because of its tremendous sample, i.e., number of ballots. The other side argued that a relatively small sample could be used, if scientifically distributed.

From another angle, we find a third general classification of the polls. One group used "interval sampling," covering a standard cross-section several times during the campaign, while another used the cumulative method, adding its results together into a single report. The state-by-state polls which came nearest to actual election figures were conducted wholly or in part by personal interviews, with comparatively small samples, repeated at frequent intervals. The poll farthest from the truth used mail only, a tremendous sample, and gave only one complete report on the whole United States, accumulated over a period of several months.

Pollmakers have had their great test. What lessons can be learned from the actual election results? First, let us consider some of the difficulties of the poller's task.

The greatest difficulty of all is the fact that the election itself is not a census, but an application of the sampling principle. Every poll is therefore a sample of a sample. There is no guarantee whatever that the 1940 election will be the same kind of sample that the 1936 election was. And the 1936 election probably was a different cross-section of all voters from the cross-section of the 1932 election. It is an actual fact, though little realized, that the will of the majority may very well be expressed more accurately in a poll than in an election. The pollmaker's problem in predicting election results, therefore, is not one of showing the standing of the candidates in people's minds, but rather one of estimating what proportion of each class of voters will give expression to their feelings at the ballot box.

There are today some 75,000,000 men and women of voting age in this country. Only a few million of these are ineligible to vote because of change

of residence, lack of citizenship, etc. Of all those of voting age, only about 60 per cent took the trouble to register and vote this year (or were unable to vote). A pre-election poll, therefore, must either assume that the other 40 per cent would vote the same way as the 60 per cent, or make some estimate of what the difference would be. The assumption of uniformity is, of course, obviously untenable, because we know that one very large group is normally prevented, by one means or another, from voting—Southern Negroes. We also know that political machines, even if honestly operated, usually bring out the vote in greater ratios than ordinary campaign speeches bring out the voluntary vote. Scientific polling therefore runs afoul of the coercive factor in a national election.

The second great difficulty in predicting election results is the functioning of the electoral system. Roosevelt drew 60 per cent of the popular vote, but 99 per cent of the electoral vote. If the election had been close, the popular vote might have gone to Landon and the electoral vote to Roosevelt, or vice versa. Let us assume for argument that the three largest states in terms of electoral votes—New York, Pennsylvania, and Illinois—had voted for Roosevelt by a margin of about 2,000 votes each, but that enough of the other states had gone to Roosevelt to swing the election. A poll accurate down to tenths of one per cent might easily have shown Landon the victor, while another poll which erroneously indicated a landslide for Roosevelt—inaccurate by 10 per cent or 20 per cent or more—would have picked the right winner.

These three large states totalled 112 electoral votes. A poll with superfine measurements could have shown Landon with the necessary 266 votes, whereas very inaccurate measurements, erring heavily on the fortunate side, might check with an election result of only 154 votes for Landon (266 less 112).

The actual fact is that the polls in general did not forecast this election with anything like the degree of accuracy that should be achieved when they are perfected. It is high time to put to profit the lessons we can learn from this election about pollmaking. It should be possible so to improve the polls that accuracy could be achieved almost to one percentage point. In the light of this possibility and of the difficulties enumerated above, it would seem that in all but the extremely infrequent very close elections such as the Hughes-Wilson, Hayes-Tilden, and similar contests, the right man would be picked. It is unlikely that every close state could always be correctly assigned. On that account, 100 per cent accuracy in forecasting electoral

votes should not be expected where there are any states near to a tie. Popular votes, however, should be closely estimated.

## DETAILED EXAMINATION OF POLLS AND FORECASTS

How can the utmost accuracy be obtained? What does the election tell us as to what the ideal poll should be?

First, it must be flexible. Its basis must not be an outdated mailing list. It must be so designed that it can be adjusted readily if new information, such as registration figures, becomes available during its course. As a part of its flexibility, it must reveal enough about the individual voter, and about individual cities or towns, economic groups, etc., to permit adjustment where needed.

Second, a fairly small sample will work properly in all but close states.

Third, the distribution of the sample is of paramount importance.

Fourth, it should not be cumulative, but repeated in similar cross-sections at intervals to show trends.

On all of these counts the *Literary Digest* method is outmoded. Many times during the progress of the campaign I have been asked how the *Digest* could be wrong this year and always right before. There are two answers.

First of all, the "uncanny accuracy" of the *Digest* is something of a legend, not entirely justified. It has not by any means achieved a perfect record in all States, and its U.S. average has sometimes represented a cancellation of opposite errors. Furthermore, its figures in any individual State have often been far from the actual election figures.

Secondly, the *Digest* depends for its accuracy not only upon its mailing list, but more especially upon the degree to which each class of voter returns the postcards. Both the 1932 and the 1936 elections were marked by protest votes. In 1932 there was a countrywide wave of protest against Hoover, reaching into all income levels. In 1936 anti-Roosevelt feeling ran high in the upper income classes. The *Digest* with its millions of postcards offers an ideal medium for an expression of protest. Those who have not made up their minds how to vote, those who have no strong feelings about the candidates, and those who are of minimum intelligence are less apt to read and return the *Digest* ballots than are those who possess an urgent desire to register their opinions. The *Digest* somewhat overestimated the Roosevelt strength in 1932, probably because of anti-Hoover protest all

along the line. It greatly overestimated Landon in 1936, probably because of the anti-Roosevelt feeling among those who returned cards.

The *Literary Digest* mailed ballots to 100 per cent of the registered voters in Allentown, Pennsylvania, and to 33 per cent in Chicago. The results showed Landon having 53 per cent of the total vote in Allentown and 49 per cent in Chicago. These cities actually gave Landon 41 per cent and 32 per cent of their ballots respectively. Clearly, sheer size of a poll is no guarantee of infallibility.

The poll with the largest sample, best able to compare results by weeks, clung tenaciously to the cumulative method. The polls with very small samples showed their results separately for one-week or two-week periods, revealing the trends.

These polls, however, gave no indication of a switch from Landon leadership to Roosevelt leadership during the fall campaign. Landon's lead in the *Digest* poll was so great that even if ballots had been sent out and returned in the last week of October, it seems certain that the Kansas Governor would still have been shown the winner. The Gallup poll had shown Roosevelt ahead all year, except for a very brief period immediately following the Cleveland convention when Landon led by a narrow margin. The Crossley poll, consistently in all of its ten investigations in August, September, and October, showed Roosevelt in control.

The various polls showed fluctuations in degree of popularity, but the facts prove that at no time was Roosevelt in danger of losing. Landon undoubtedly made gains during September, but he never gained enough to take the lead. Alibis dealing with last-minute switches in public opinion therefore will not do.

## THE GALLUP POLL AND CONTROLLED QUOTAS

The American Institute of Public Opinion (the Gallup poll) with a combination of mail and personal interviews, put into operation a scientific principle which has been used in marketing research for some years. The success of this principle in predicting a Roosevelt landslide in the face of the *Digest* figures, accomplishes two highly important results: (1) It creates among manufacturers a high degree of confidence in marketing surveys using scientific sampling; and (2) It opens up a new field for marketing research organizations in the study of public opinion as related to local, state and national issues.



The scientific principle involved is that of distribution of the sample in direct correlation with the distribution of voters. This is the quota-control principle by which marketing-research organizations sample consumer opinions and purchases, measure the radio audience of individual programs, and forecast sales trends.

The fact that the *Digest* was not obtaining a true cross-section of voters became apparent very early when it was revealed that the 1936 ballots voted preponderantly for Hoover in 1932. The *Digest* of November 14 admits that they had been worried about this, but had dismissed the thought because in the past errors of like nature had not been reflected in the result. The disregard of this patent warning proved the *Digest's* undoing, because this was an election in which errors could not cancel out by means of a high degree of unanimity of protest in all economic levels.

The Institute even went so far as to forecast the *Digest* vote, which it did with remarkable accuracy by the simple means of tabulating separately that part of its ballots which followed the *Digest's* general basis.

The quota-control combination of mail and personal interviews worked out by Dr. Gallup and his research associates was tested in the previous Congressional elections, and checked and improved for two years. Briefly, its basis consisted of a carefully selected mailing list of approximately 100,000 names, plus several thousand properly distributed personal interviews, confined for the most part to the lower income levels. While no official figures have been released, it is apparent that the usable ballots, including those returned by mail and those obtained personally, normally numbered around 30,000 each time, this figure being raised somewhat as the campaign closed. This is but little more than 1 per cent of the *Digest* sample, and less than one-tenth of one per cent of the total vote. It is only about one-twentieth of one per cent of those eligible to vote.

Even more striking perhaps is the fact that the *Fortune* poll, with a scientifically distributed sample of one one-hundredth of one per cent of the total vote, forecast the popular vote within approximately one percentage point.

These are the principal factors which must be considered in attempting proper allocation of ballots:

1. *Any mail polling must be based, not upon the distribution of outgoing letters, but upon the way incoming ballots fall into the several divisions.*

Thus, if the *Digest* had taken the trouble to set up tests to find out exactly and in detail where its incoming sample was heavy, and where it was

relatively light, it could have applied the quota-control system to a mail ballot with far more successful results than it obtained. For example, if tests had shown a relatively weak return in one income level, one population group, etc., special mailing lists could have been used in the right proportions to build up the incoming ballots to quota in each division.

2. *For a popular vote percentage, usable ballots must either be distributed state by state exactly according to the estimated total vote of that state, or the figures for each state must be weighted before they are added together for a United States total.*

The former is less practical because it means that the usable sample in New York State must be nearly 150 times the usable sample in Nevada. Therefore, if 500 were considered a minimum for Nevada, 75,000 would be necessary for New York to achieve the proportion. Actually, the electoral value of New York (47) is less than sixteen times the electoral value of Nevada (3), and it is a fair statistical assumption that a sample of 8,000 in New York State is sufficient, if 500 is sufficient for Nevada. For this reason, our own Crossley poll allocated its sample by states according to electoral values.

3. *To determine how any given state will vote, usable ballots (i.e., personal interviews or RETURNED mail ballots) must parallel VOTERS in each part of the state, and in each population group.*

This means that before we can guarantee anything like absolute accuracy in forecasting elections, we must obtain a great deal more information on vote distribution than we now have.

Let us take the state of Pennsylvania as an example. Here is a state which has definite geographical divisions. The Pittsburgh sector, the Philadelphia sector, the Scranton sector, and the Pennsylvania German towns and farms, are just a few of the distinctly different geographical areas, which make it impossible to sample any small part of the state with assurance that the sample will be typical.

Sampling every county meant many thousands of ballots. The ideal state breakdown seemed to be the natural election unit—the Congressional district. In each state the Congressional districts number two less than the electoral vote, so that a state like Nevada would have no breakdown, while New York would be divided into a maximum of 45 parts. Each Congressional district represents about 280,000 population, and there are approximately 450 such districts in the whole country.



## HOW TO LOCATE THE PROPER SURVEY POINTS

Our first job in laying out a sample is to study past vote statistics. If we could find some common factor which appears to influence large blocks of voters, we might be able to simplify our job and keep costs down to a minimum. For our Crossley poll we determined that there were two dominating factors: (1) Machine or party organization for getting out the vote; (2) The source of family income; i.e., occupation.

We determined to treat party organization as an unknown factor, because we saw no practical way of evaluating it in this election. As things turned out, this was the one upsetting factor in all polls. The only way it could have been estimated statistically was by an extensive and expensive investigation in hundreds of counties, involving field interviews and analysis of late registration statistics. In future polls, it will probably be feasible to work out estimates based on averages of several elections, corrected for late registration statistics.

It was our belief that political attitudes were largely determined by the voter's line of work. In this election that seemed particularly true. Business leaders largely were against Roosevelt, labor in general was for him. Unemployed on relief or temporarily employed on made-work were almost solidly for Roosevelt. The farmers had been catered to by benefit payments. Individual industries had labor organizers working in Roosevelt's interest.

With these things in mind, we studied the dominating industries of every Congressional district in the United States, and selected our investigation points accordingly. If a given district should be dominated by steel and by dairy farming, for example, we would concentrate our interviews in a steel center and on dairy farms. In this way we covered all sections of a state, all population groups, and all principal industries.

It was a simple matter to fix quotas of interviews based on population, but unfortunately voters do not follow population. If, for example, we had prorated New York State on the basis of population, we would have overweighted the strongly Democratic New York City. New York City has 56% of the state's population, but normally only 45 per cent of the state's voters. Therefore, 45 per cent of our New York State interviews went to New York City. Wherever information on voters was available, quotas were set up on that basis, otherwise population was taken as the base.

There is a crying need for more precise vote-analysis. We knew the part

of each state's population residing on farms, but for most states we did not know whether or not the farmers turned out to the polls in large numbers. If the farmers should be pro-Landon and if they voted in heavy ratios to their division of the population, then a quota based on population instead of on voters would underestimate the Landon strength.

4. *To determine how any given city or town will vote, usable ballots (personal interviews or RETURNED mail ballots) must parallel VOTERS in each part of the city or town.*

To be accurate, this meant laying out a city into groups of election districts, or groups of precincts, to cover all rental classes. It was even important to cover races in the proper proportions, because in this election, the Jewish vote appeared to be pro-Roosevelt, the Italian vote anti-Roosevelt. The Negro vote seemed largely Roosevelt this year. The Catholic vote in New York State was attracted by the Republican candidate for Governor.

The size of the sample which our appropriation would permit and the limitation of the six weeks available for organization, rendered impractical a careful study of the vote in every one of the 622 investigation points selected. As a makeshift, we set up a standard quota for each of five income levels, based upon our best estimate of the way voters would divide on election day. This ratio was 10 per cent "A" or top income class; 15 per cent "B" (upper middle); 20 per cent "C" (middle); 40 per cent "D" (lower middle); 15 per cent "E" (low). Quotas for sex and age were arranged by covering all the voters in a family.

This quota arrangement produced a result a little more on the Roosevelt side than any other state-by-state poll, and at variance with best advice at the time. We therefore made an adjustment after the first two weeks, changing the "C" and "D" ratios to 25 per cent and 35 per cent respectively. Our figures immediately swung slightly to the Landon side of the Gallup poll.

We now know that we made two errors of judgment, based on incomplete information: (1) In the three states in which we were definitely wrong, we needed more strictly industrial small towns; and (2) We should have adjusted the weight of our sample downward instead of upward in income levels. More particularly, however, we should have made such adjustments differently in different states and cities and towns. Neither of these things we could foresee. This was the first time the method had ever been tried, and the voter quotas had to be learned by experience.

## THE FUTURE OF THE POLLS

The day after election the *New York Herald Tribune* printed a scathing editorial denouncing all polls, and damning with faint praise even the Gallup poll, which it had carried. Since then the *New York Times* has run a series of derogatory editorials and special articles. Other newspapers and periodicals have also shown varying degrees of criticism. Senator McKellar has announced his intention of investigating the *Digest* poll, and has advised the *Digest* to keep all of its records intact.

Is all this criticism justified? Its motivation appears to be threefold. There are those who think that the polls never can be counted on, and are therefore useless. There are those who think they create a desire to "join the bandwagon" and vote with the majority. And there are those who regard an open revelation of public opinion as dangerous. A fourth class undoubtedly is a disgruntled group whose pocketbooks were adversely affected by one of the polls.

To the first group a categorical answer has already been given. Despite certain shortcomings, the polls have effectively demonstrated their ability to forecast an election, even, as in this contest, against tremendous odds. The Gallup poll in its final story gave Roosevelt 489 electoral votes (counting ties the way they were trending) and indicated a possible 519. The *Fortune* and Crossley polls also showed a Roosevelt landslide. The *Farm Journal* and Grass Roots polls should be discounted because they did not cover all groups. Only the *Literary Digest* made a serious error, with a badly distributed sample.

The small sample carefully distributed has proved its point. That it did not correctly allow for organization tactics, and that it did not have sufficient data for accuracy in each state is beside the point. Involved statistical methods were being given their first trial. The results clearly indicated the way to make future forecasts extremely close to election figures in every state.

The second point may have partial justification. To some extent the polls may possibly influence voters "on the fence." The question is, how great is that extent, and is it a bandwagon rush, or a protest rush to the polls. The *Literary Digest* certainly failed to swing Landon votes, and that was the poll with the reputation. The Gallup and Crossley polls, until the end of the campaign, showed Roosevelt leadership by a fairly narrow popular margin. These polls had not made reputations. There was, therefore, undoubtedly no Roosevelt rush to vote on the winning side. But there

may have been, as the result of the polls, extra effort on both sides to get out the vote, with the New Dealers the more successful. Thus, the *Digest* may have aided the Roosevelt cause to some extent. Again, it must be borne in mind that the election itself is not necessarily a true cross-section of the total population. It is a cross-section of the opinions of those who go to the polls. Herded voters can always be met with voluntary voters, if the latter will take the trouble to vote.

Figures on the undecided vote in late August, however, indicated that some 37,000,000 voters had already made up their minds, and that the campaigns were centering on about 7,000,000 votes. At that time Roosevelt had a comfortable lead among those who had made up their minds—a lead which no ordinary opposition tactics could overcome in the available time. Roosevelt supporters, fearful that the *Digest* might be right, may possibly have swarmed to the polls, but there is no evidence to indicate that the *Digest* thus influenced anything like as many as 5 per cent of the voters. The bandwagon or protest influence of stray votes, if it exists at all, appears therefore to be a minor factor, and the situation is out in the open to be met squarely by both sides.

If the polls are legislated out of existence, it will be chiefly because an open revelation of public opinion is not desired. The *New York Times* fears that legislators will be swayed by polls because they desire to be re-elected. "The American form of Government is not really built to function successfully on this pattern. It is properly assumed that our representatives will think for themselves." In other words, it might be dangerous if our lawmakers knew the desires of their constituents.

The desire for reelection being what it is, the argument may have some weight. But the choice is not between vox populi and silence. The real choice is between reliable information and unreliable information supplied by pressure groups. Our representatives in Congress and in state legislatures today are not unmindful of their constituents. They are avid readers of their home papers, and they are swayed by the weight of letters and telegrams induced by a radio orator, or by an organization following the order of a lobby.

In the next four years, the country will be faced with many important issues. The last Congress has often been termed a "rubber stamp" group. What of the next Congress? Will it be subject to the direction of the executive branch of the Government? Will it be swayed by pressure groups with false presentations of public opinion? Or will it seek by scientific

sampling to give American voters the opportunity to express themselves on their views and needs of the day?

Scientific polling on individual issues fills a great gap in the democratic form of government, a gap which our forefathers could see but not overcome. That magnificent system of checks and balances which inter-related the executive, judicial, and legislative branches of our government provided also for some but not enough expression of popular will. At frequent intervals there would be elections to support or reject the sum-total of the policies of our representatives. Impeachments were provided for, also referenda. But no system could be foreseen which would give the American people an active part in the making of any individual law.

Scientific polling makes it possible within two or three days at moderate expense for the entire nation to work hand in hand with its legislative representatives, on laws which affect our daily lives. Here is the long-sought key to "Government by the people."

*For a statistical analysis of straw-poll accuracy in the recent election, the reader is referred to the study by Professor Gosnell beginning on page 96.*



# PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT AND THE WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENTS

By LEO C. ROSTEN

For more than a year, as a Fellow of the Social Science Research Council, Mr. Rosten has been studying the rôle of the Washington newspaper correspondent in the formation of public opinion. The conclusions presented in this paper are based on information obtained from extensive interviews with correspondents of 165 leading newspapers in the United States, and from two detailed questionnaires filled out by 127 accredited Washington correspondents. Mr. Rosten did his graduate work at the University of Chicago and the London School of Economics and Political Science, and has contributed articles to *Harper's*, the *New Republic*, and other magazines. The following article is based on a chapter from his book, *The Washington Correspondents*, to appear in 1937.

Few Presidents have received as eulogistic a press as Franklin D. Roosevelt. Not even Theodore Roosevelt, for all his brash exhibitionism, created as sympathetic a rapport with the Washington correspondents or profited so markedly from it. From 1933 through 1934, news dispatches from the capital publicized President Roosevelt's talents and extolled his political astuteness. The newspapermen who swarmed to press conferences at the White House were convinced that "here was a politician to make Machiavelli, Mark Hanna, Talleyrand, and Boies Penrose hang their heads in utter shame."<sup>1</sup> Publishers began to complain that Mr. Roosevelt had hypnotized their reporters with his charm and misled them with his "propaganda."<sup>2</sup>

In 1935 an unmistakable trend in the opposite direction began. Dispatches evidenced a more aggressive and critical journalistic orientation. In Washington newspaper circles one encountered less hero-worship, more skepticism of both the President's personal graces and his political acumen. One veteran correspondent, Mr. Ashmun Brown of the *Providence Journal*, honorably mentioned in the last Pulitzer Prize awards, appeared in print with an astringent article which insisted that "the Roosevelt Myth" is no more.<sup>3</sup> Other newspapermen in the capital began to write caustically of Mr.

<sup>1</sup> Ashmun Brown, "The Roosevelt Myth," *American Mercury*, April, 1936, p. 390.

<sup>2</sup> See remarks of J. Fred Essary of the *Baltimore Sun*, in Robert S. Mann, "Capital Corps No Propaganda Victim, Writers Tell Journalism Teachers," *Editor and Publisher*, January 4, 1936, p. 3.

<sup>3</sup> *op. cit.*, pp. 390-4.

Roosevelt's "dictatorial" aspirations, the menace of his "propaganda" or the various follies of the New Deal.<sup>4</sup>

Now both in the myth about Mr. Roosevelt which the Washington correspondents propagated, and in the energies devoted to the later deflation of it, there is an illuminating lesson for analysts of public opinion. Neither the myth-making nor the myth-destroying was an inexplicable or unique phenomenon. The same journalistic process has operated before; and it will be repeated with future Presidents and by future correspondents. The dynamics of that process are not to be found solely in the stresses of the recent election campaign, in Mr. Roosevelt's personality or press technique, or in any sudden intellectual maturing on the part of the newspapermen.

### WINNING THE PRESS CORPS

The circumstances under which President Roosevelt took office were auspicious. After the negativism of Calvin Coolidge and the intransigence of Herbert Hoover,<sup>5</sup> any executive with an engaging manner, a modicum of wit and an appreciation of newspaper problems was destined to receive an enthusiastic welcome from the Washington press corps. Mr. Roosevelt's felicity, his ingratiating personality, above all his insight into publicity techniques, effected a revolution in White House press relations. The social setting in 1933 was, of course, ideal from a strictly "news" point of view. National tension, the despair and hope, the popular hunger for a political symbol of reassurance, humaneness and warmth—these were made to order for a man who knew how to dramatize himself and his program in terms understandable to the common man. In the vigorous action of the Hundred Days after he took office, Mr. Roosevelt was lifted to the stature of a savior by the public, and a political wizard by the newspapermen.

Mr. Roosevelt's impact upon the Washington correspondents was galvanic. Precedents were brushed aside, formalities ignored, the hocus-pocus of Presidential aloofness forgotten. "The White House spokesman," that irritating fiction of the Coolidge era, was abolished. The use of written questions, inaugurated by President Harding after a disastrous *faux pas* in

<sup>4</sup> See, for example, David Lawrence, "The Lost Right of Privacy," *American Mercury*, May, 1936, pp. 12-18; Eugene A. Kelly, "Distorting the News," *ibid.*, March, 1935, pp. 307-18; Robert E. Kintner, "The SEC Dictatorship," *ibid.*, June, 1936, pp. 180-7; Paul Leach in *Chicago Daily News*, May 20, 1935, p. 7.

<sup>5</sup> On Coolidge's press relations see Oswald Garrison Villard, "The Press and the Presidency," *Century*, December, 1925, pp. 193-200. On Hoover see Paul Y. Anderson, "Hoover and the Press," *Nation*, October 14, 1931, pp. 382-4.

a press conference which had international repercussions,<sup>6</sup> was ended. At his first meeting with the newspapermen, on March 8, 1933, Mr. Roosevelt announced that the correspondents would be free to ask direct oral questions. If this seems unspectacular to the reader, it should be pointed out that the President's advisers had warned him against oral questioning as an unnecessary and dangerous procedure: they awaited it with trepidation, the correspondents with skepticism. No President had submitted to the hazardous practice of oral questioning en masse. Mr. Roosevelt did—and won the press corps by his skill.

The President's technique and the spirit which pervaded that first press conference are worth describing in detail: they have become something of a legend in newspaper circles. Mr. Roosevelt was introduced to each correspondent personally. Many of them he already knew and greeted by name—first name. For each he had a handshake, a gracious word, and the Roosevelt smile. When the oral questioning began, the full virtuosity of the new Chief Executive was demonstrated. Cigarette-holder in mouth at a jaunty angle, he met the reporters on their own grounds. His answers were swift, positive, illuminating. He had an astonishing amount of exact information at his fingertips. He showed an impressive understanding of public problems and administrative methods. He was lavish in his confidences and "background information." His "off the record" remarks, designed for the exclusive consumption of the correspondents, provided them with valuable insights into the motivations of political action. He was informal, communicative, gay. He indulged in humor and laughed at reportorial quips. When he evaded a question it was done frankly, with a disarming smile, not—à la his predecessors—with a scowl. He was thoroughly at ease: poised, confident, indicating his pleasure in the give and take of the press conference.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup> At a press conference in 1921, while the Washington Conference was in session, President Harding was asked whether the agreement between the powers included the Japanese islands in the Pacific (in the Four Power Pacific Pact). He answered that it did not. This interpretation contradicted the understanding of the British and Japanese, who protested. Secretary of State Hughes, chairman of the conference, hurried to the White House and got Harding to issue a retraction. He prevailed upon Harding to institute the rule of written questions from the newspapermen. See Villard, *op. cit.*, p. 200; also George H. Manning, "Capital Corps Hopes For 'New Deal,'" *Editor and Publisher*, March 4, 1933, p. 5.

<sup>7</sup> For a detailed description of the first press conference see George H. Manning, "'New Deal' For Press Begins At Once," *Editor and Publisher*, March 11, 1933, pp. 3-4. For the value of "off the record" comments see Ernest K. Lindley, *The Roosevelt Revolution: First Phase* (Viking, 1933), pp. 280 ff.; and Erwin D. Canham, "Democracy's Fifth Wheel," *Literary Digest*, January 5, 1935, p. 6.

The correspondents were exhilarated. Mr. Roosevelt's first interview with the reporters of the capital ended in a spontaneous outburst of applause, a phenomenon unprecedented in White House annals. One of the oldest and most respected correspondents in Washington, Mr. Henry M. Hyde of the *Baltimore Evening Sun*, called it "the most amazing performance the White House has ever seen."<sup>8</sup> The President was showered with praise. For two years, at least, he was the answer to the newspapermen's dream. Students of public opinion will find in the magazine files from March 1933 on, a long series of articles written by Washington correspondents who lauded Mr. Roosevelt: his personality, his policies, his methods, his goals.

The press barely restrained its whoopees. . . . Here was news—action—drama! Here was a new attitude to the press! . . . The reportorial affection and admiration for the President is unprecedented. He has definitely captivated an unusually cynical battalion of correspondents.<sup>9</sup>

Even the editor of the austere trade journal, *Editor and Publisher*, was ebullient.

Mr. Roosevelt is a great hit among newspapermen at Washington. I rubbed my ears (*sic!*) and opened my eyes when I heard hard-boiled veterans, men who had lived through so many administrations and been so disillusioned that there are callouses in their brain, talk glibly about the merits of the White House incumbent. If Mr. Roosevelt fails the craft, by any false word or deed, he will break a hundred hearts that have not actually palpitated for any political figure in many a year.<sup>10</sup>

## BASES OF THE PRESIDENT'S POPULARITY

The reasons for this surprising exhibition of hero-worship by presumably "hard-boiled" newspapermen are not difficult to isolate. Mr. Roosevelt's colloquial manner soothed journalistic egos still smarting under the rebuffs of his predecessor. The laughter at press conferences was in the nature of a catharsis: in it was vented some of the intense hostility which Mr. Hoover had aroused.<sup>11</sup> Newspapermen admired President Roosevelt's adroit handling of questions. They appreciated his efforts to give them valuable information in a form they could incorporate into their dispatches. Mr. Roosevelt won professional approbation for his "news sense," his ability to "time"

<sup>8</sup> Quoted in "Roosevelt Ungags The Press," *Literary Digest*, March 25, 1933, p. 10.

<sup>9</sup> Ray Tucker, "Part-Time Statesmen," *Collier's*, October 28, 1933, pp. 26ff.

<sup>10</sup> Marlen Pew, "Shop Talk At Thirty," *Editor and Publisher*, April 8, 1933, p. 36.

<sup>11</sup> For the correspondents' antagonism to Hoover see Paul Y. Anderson, *op. cit.*; George H. Manning, "Strained Air Pervades Press Circle," *Editor and Publisher*, July 18, 1931, p. 10; *Washington Merry-Go-Round* (by Robert S. Allen and Drew Pearson, Liveright, 1931), pp. 321-66.

a story so that it broke with maximum force at the most strategic moment, his skill in dramatizing announcements and acts. His talent for investing even routine affairs with distinctive news value provided the correspondents with an unparalleled supply of "hot stories." "He never sent the reporters away empty-handed . . . and reporters are all for a man who can give them several laughs and a couple of top-head dispatches in a twenty-minute visit."<sup>12</sup> Above all, the positivism and range of Mr. Roosevelt's action, pouring climax upon climax in a remarkable sequence of political moves, won newspapermen, no less than lay citizens, after the obstinate inertia of the last White House occupant.

A man who is able, without batting an eye, to launch NRA, AAA, a \$3,000,000,000 public-works program, the Civilian Conservation Corps program, slam the banks shut, go off the gold standard, revalue the dollar, take on every sort of discretionary power instead of trying to shoulder off on Congress a share of the responsibility, was bound to register with a corps of newspapermen who were weary of trimmers, pussyfooters, and people who had not given them a new idea to write about since the World War.<sup>13</sup>

The Washington correspondents were grateful to the man who had given them "something new" to write about. They were reassured by his swift and positive action. They were pleased by Mr. Roosevelt's obvious efforts to win their good-will. They were flattered by "off the record" comments. They admired the President's ability to make lucid explanations of intricate measures. Their professional ethic was gratified by the fact that Mr. Roosevelt cultivated them as a group, playing no favorites and breeding no "trained seals"—as Mr. Hoover had done.<sup>14</sup> Many of them were won by the hospitality shown at picnics, receptions and Sunday afternoon teas at which the President and Mrs. Roosevelt played host to the press. On Presidential trips they were carefully provided for, their comfort and working conditions considered. This was an extraordinary contrast to the "flying cavalcades" to the Rapidan Camp by which President Hoover, making unannounced trips and trying to shake the reporters from his trail, had earned their enmity.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Raymond Clapper, "Why Reporters Like Roosevelt," *Review of Reviews*, June, 1934, p. 15. See also "Correspondents Like Roosevelt," *American Press*, March, 1933, p. 3.

<sup>13</sup> Raymond Clapper, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

<sup>14</sup> Newspapermen considered Mark Sullivan, William Hard, Leroy Vernon and several others "trained seals." It was felt that Mr. Hoover supplied them with information not offered to the corps as a whole; and that they reciprocated with dispatches pleasing to the President. See "Feeding the Press," *Collier's*, August 16, 1930, p. 34; *Washington Merry-Go-Round*, pp. 321-66.

<sup>15</sup> George H. Manning, *op. cit.*, *Editor and Publisher*, July 18, 1931, p. 10. The "flying cavalcades" cost three lives; one correspondent and his wife were seriously injured trying to keep up with the pace set by the car in which Mr. Hoover rode; protest was widespread, and futile. *ibid.*



Mr. Roosevelt was, indeed, a "natural" for newspaper purposes. Never had news been so easy to get, so plentiful, so dramatic. The President's influence permeated every department and bureau of the government. Press conferences with cabinet members and administrative officers reflected the congenial tone set by the White House. During the critical days of the bank crisis, Secretary of the Treasury Woodin supplied information in an informal, non-technical fashion. Postmaster General James A. Farley indulged in a winning frankness and good humor. Secretary of Agriculture Wallace was sincere, cooperative, appealing. Secretary of the Interior Ickes became a first-rate "news source" because of his personality and gift for picturesque language.<sup>16</sup>

The President's influence was even more perceptible. When one executive in NRA refused to cooperate with the press he was discharged on direct orders from the White House.<sup>17</sup> When Major Dalrymple of the liquor division of the Internal Revenue Office rebuked newspapermen and told them "not to hang around my office," he was chastised in a manner certain to win the correspondents' hearts.<sup>18</sup> When Henry Morgenthau, on becoming Acting Secretary of the Treasury, issued his General Order Number 1 on November 20, 1933, ruling that all departmental news must come directly from him or his press agent, the order was modified by the President's personal intervention after the Treasury Correspondents Association had wired their protest to Hyde Park.<sup>19</sup> There was general agreement among the Washington correspondents that the New Deal was exerting every effort to provide accurate news, and that the press agents of the various governmental agencies were doing an excellent and commendable job. Even the "handouts," later the subject of considerable criticism, were praised for their factual veracity and the invaluable service which they afforded hard-pressed newspapermen.<sup>20</sup>

It was "a newspaperman's administration." The correspondents "believed in Mr. Roosevelt's courage, his sincerity, his willingness to experiment. . . .

<sup>16</sup> For praise of the press relations of Cabinet members see George H. Manning, *op. cit.*, *Editor and Publisher*, March 11, 1933, pp. 3-4.

<sup>17</sup> Bice Clemow, "Recovery On Way, Capital Corps Feels," *Editor and Publisher*, December 29, 1934, p. 8.

<sup>18</sup> George R. Holmes, quoted in Bice Clemow, *ibid.*

<sup>19</sup> *New York Times*, November 22, 1933, p. 1; also *Time*, December 4, 1933, p. 40.

<sup>20</sup> See comments of several correspondents on the New Deal press agents and "handouts," in Bice Clemow, *op. cit.*, *Editor and Publisher*, December 29, 1934, pp. 7-8. Also Arthur Krock, in a speech to the National Republican Club in New York City, January 26, 1935. Copy in my possession. For a lengthy, critical analysis of press agents see William E. Berchtold, "Press Agents of the New Deal," *New Outlook*, July, 1934, pp. 23-30ff.

He was really shooting for his goal . . . it wasn't all pre-election hokum."<sup>21</sup> Mr. Arthur Sears Henning, head of the Washington bureau of the *Chicago Tribune* and "dean" of the press corps, stated that never had relations between the press and the White House been so happy.<sup>22</sup> Mr. George R. Holmes, bureau chief of the International News Service, praised the President for his policy, called him "his own best press relations man," and said that in the twenty years he had been in Washington he had "never known a time when the administration seemed more honest in giving out news."<sup>23</sup> Mr. Arthur Krock, head of the *New York Times* office, said that Mr. Roosevelt was the greatest reader and critic of newspapers he had ever seen in the Presidential office; and, the final accolade, "He could qualify as the chief of a great copy desk."<sup>24</sup>

### THE HONEYMOON ENDS

The honeymoon could not last. Those versed in the vicissitudes of politics and the occupational psychology of newspapermen knew that an indefinite continuation of this rapport was impossible. The Washington correspondents had propagated the impression that Franklin D. Roosevelt was a paragon of talents and a repository of supreme political skills. Events which shattered this idea of their own creation released that iconoclasm which is the successor to faith.

The correspondents began to falter in their emotional allegiance as the structure of the New Deal began to totter. In some dismay they were driven to the conclusion that Mr. Roosevelt's More Abundant Life was overdue. Unemployment figures began to worry them—particularly since they could not get exact ones from government sources. Some began to murmur that, for all the ballyhoo, the New Deal was less an integrated program than a series of adventures in the realm of political economy. It was said that however defensible emergency measures had been because of the national crisis, they were not yielding the expected returns. Many newspapermen found it difficult to reconcile the politicianship of Mr. Farley, for whom they had a genuine personal affection, with Rooseveltian moral purpose. For a time dissatisfaction with the administration's program and record was withheld from release. But a succession of episodes in which Mr. Roosevelt was directly involved undermined their faith.

<sup>21</sup> Raymond Clapper, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

<sup>22</sup> "New Deal Praised By Henning," *Editor and Publisher*, June 10, 1933, p. 54.

<sup>23</sup> Bice Clemow, *op. cit.*, *Editor and Publisher*, December 29, 1934, p. 8.

<sup>24</sup> *ibid.* See also Mr. Krock's comments in the speech cited above.

At a press conference in February 1935, the President was asked whether he would support state NRA legislation. He answered in the negative. The correspondents hastened to send off their dispatches and in some places special editions appeared. That afternoon Governor McNutt of Indiana, in the middle of a campaign to stimulate NRA legislation in his state, called the White House on the telephone; Mr. Roosevelt assured him that he (the President) had been misquoted and sent a telegram to Governor McNutt, the contents of which were made available to the press. It read, in part:

I have no hesitation in making perfectly plain to you the extraordinary misinterpretation put upon my reply at press conference.<sup>25</sup>

At his next press conference Mr. Roosevelt chided the correspondents for their "misinterpretation." He warned the corps not to draw unwarranted inferences from his failure to comment on "pending legislation," since 80 per cent of such conjectures were incorrect.<sup>26</sup> The newspapermen were surprised. They felt that the President had wriggled out of a difficult situation, leaving them to hold the bag.

After the "Dred Schechter decision," to use one of Mr. H. L. Mencken's palatable phrases, Mr. Roosevelt delivered his famous "horse and buggy" stricture against the Supreme Court, in the press conference of May 31, 1935. Some correspondents thought the comments petulant and impolitic. Those who regarded the Constitution as a parchment of divine origin called the President's comments heresy. To others it was simply the most unforgivable of political sins: bad strategy. For many reasons, Mr. Roosevelt's political reputation suffered.

On June 24, 1935, the President held an emergency conference with congressional leaders. When it was over, Senators Harrison and Robinson, spokesmen for the administration, declared that a decision had been made to push through the President's recommendations for so-called "Soak the Rich" legislation, by attaching it as a rider to a bill pending on excise taxes. A howl of protest went through the editorials of the land. At his next press conference, June 26, 1935, Mr. Roosevelt announced that he had *not* recommended such legislation. This contradicted the statements which the newspapermen had obtained from Senators Robinson and Harrison. "The correspondents . . . gasped in amazement. The questions which followed reflected their anger and incredulity."<sup>27</sup>

<sup>25</sup> Bice Clemow, "F. D. R. Retains 'Open' Conferences," *Editor and Publisher*, March 2, 1935, p. 9.

<sup>26</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>27</sup> Ashmun Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 392.

Several blunders of another caliber saddened correspondents who had come to believe in their own reports of Mr. Roosevelt's infallible political acumen: his letter of July 7, 1935, to Representative Sam Hill, apropos the Guffey Coal Bill ("I hope your committee will not permit doubts as to constitutionality, however reasonable, to block this legislation.");<sup>28</sup> his public reversal of attitude on the propriety of corporation gifts to charity; the flagrant error involved in the cancellation of the air-mail contracts, permitting the Army, with inadequate resources, to fly the mails—with tragic consequences; the affair of the "preacher letters," in which it was discovered that by some colossal carelessness the White House had sent out an inquiry to several thousand clergymen which in part was a verbatim copy of a letter sent six months earlier by Governor LaFollette of Wisconsin.<sup>29</sup>

Liberal correspondents were offended by the President's high-handed disposition of the case of Dean S. Jennings, a reporter discharged from one of the Hearst newspapers: the affront was particularly sharp because it hit the American Newspaper Guild, which has a small but energetic chapter among the Washington correspondents.<sup>30</sup> In the Ickes-Moses controversy, many newspapermen felt that the President was settling an old political grudge against a capable public servant in New York.<sup>31</sup> The castigation of General Hagood, creating a public scandal over a negligible issue, did not increase Mr. Roosevelt's stature as a political Machiavelli.

Other sources of irritation were less explicit, but no less corrosive. The correspondents were disillusioned when the President, in answering one newspaperman who had persisted in asking an embarrassing question, said tartly: "This isn't a cross-examination."<sup>32</sup> To newspapermen who had come to feel that they had a right to cross-examine the President on matters of policy, if not on affairs of state, this was a distressing blow.

## CORRESPONDENTS COMPLAIN

This writer has heard a wide variety of complaints which suggest the rôle which petty matters may play in swelling a general tide of hostility. Many newspapermen began to feel that the exercise of Presidential wit to

<sup>28</sup> *Time*, July 15, 1935, p. 17.

<sup>29</sup> These matters are all discussed from the point of view of a conservative correspondent in Ashmun Brown, *op. cit.*, pp. 391-4. It should be noted that Mr. Roosevelt was generally held responsible for the "preacher letter" fiasco, though the fault clearly lay with the White House secretariat.

<sup>30</sup> *Time*, December 24, 1934, p. 14.

<sup>31</sup> *ibid.*, January 21, 1935, p. 23.

<sup>32</sup> See comments of Raymond P. Brandt, quoted by Robert S. Mann, *op. cit.*, *Editor and Publisher*, January 4, 1936, p. 3.

evade a question was less a novelty than an irritant. The use of correspondents' first names was resented by some as a form of psychological bribery. Mr. Roosevelt's manner, his efforts to convey the impression of unflagging optimism, his debonair poise—these offended those newspapermen who think the dignity of the office calls for lugubrious intonations, or those who cannot forgive a personality exuberant in the face of adversity. Sober correspondents at the capital complained of the President's excessive cleverness; pedestrian correspondents, of his showmanship. Liberal correspondents mourned his compromises with the Right; conservatives, his flirtations with the Left. The Roosevelt smile was maliciously likened to a faucet, turned on and off with calculated purpose. One heard repeated displeasure over Mr. Roosevelt's facial gestures ("mugging").

There has been growing antagonism to the "off the record" remarks: they are called "silly" or "unnecessary"; it is said that they no longer divulge really confidential information but, more often, act "to sew up a story" which some correspondent was ready to write.<sup>33</sup> After the middle of 1935 attendance at the President's press conferences dropped off: some correspondents felt that the pace was slackening, that real "news" was no longer poured out in as lavish quantities; others failed to attend because they did not wish to be bound by the "off the record" remarks.<sup>34</sup>

With the spread of critical sentiment, Mr. Roosevelt was charged with faults for which his responsibility is highly questionable. For instance, at each press conference the same group of correspondents (generally from the press associations) stand in the front row, directly before the President's desk. These men, it is darkly hinted, "play the stooge": they laugh too heartily at Mr. Roosevelt's puns; their laughter embarrasses correspondents who have asked a question which the President has met with a witticism. The "front row" ordinarily supplies the "Thank you, Mr. President" which is the informal signal for the end of the conference, and some newspapermen have suggested to this writer that the technique is used to rescue Mr. Roosevelt from embarrassing situations—breaking up the press conference before vital questions have been asked. It is said, too, that reporters in "the front row clique" permit themselves to be used for "planted questions" (i.e., questions suggested to them by one of the President's secretaries) for which Mr. Roosevelt is primed with a ready and devastating answer.

<sup>33</sup> See comments of Paul Mallon and Ulric Bell, in Bice Clemow, *op. cit.*, *Editor and Publisher*, December 29, 1934, p. 8. Mr. Arthur Krock has criticized the "off the record" statements as stifling budding publication: see his speech, cited above.

<sup>34</sup> See remarks of Russell Kent and Mark Foote, *ibid.*



Now some of these charges are legitimate, some absurd. The whole array, including many which must seem picayune, is given here because it is undeniable that there are newspapermen in Washington who harbor resentment against Mr. Roosevelt for one or another of these reasons. It may be noted that since conferences with the President represent the most real contact which correspondents have with the guiding will and intelligence of government, the effect precipitated by minor incidents may have wide significance, since it is reflected in the tenor of news dispatches.

Critics have claimed that Mr. Roosevelt charmed the press by his personality and "prostituted" them to his ends. This is naïve and superficial. Mr. Roosevelt did not hypnotize the Washington correspondents. He did exploit his every grace and skill to create as sympathetic a rapport as possible. He used every means at his disposal to strengthen his position politically—and psychologically. He injected his own personality into official acts and impersonal policies. He tried to inspire news most favorable to himself, his policies, and his goals. But this any political executive will do—if he can get away with it. Where the practice was absent in Mr. Roosevelt's predecessors it was more because of a lack of adroitness than the force of moral scruples. Calvin Coolidge, for example, utilized a press technique which, allowing for the difference in his personality, was as deliberate and calculating as Mr. Roosevelt's.

... With an art that almost defied deception, (Coolidge) used his press conferences for the dissemination of trivia, which, under the deft, inflating touch of the correspondents, became important and significant.<sup>35</sup>

Behind the invulnerable device of the "White House spokesman" Mr. Coolidge refused to accept responsibility for statements he had made and raised the method of the "trial balloon" to a scientific practice. Those who recall with nostalgia the figure of the silent, modest sage from Vermont should be informed that White House press photographers had a standing joke to the effect that President Coolidge was "never too busy to be photographed," that he would pose for the cameras at almost any time, in almost any pose and in a bizarre variety of costumes.<sup>36</sup> His widely publicized taciturnity was an "angle" which the Washington correspondents seized upon and exploited because of its news-value: in reality, Mr. Coolidge often

<sup>35</sup> Henry Suydam, in *Conference on the Press* (Princeton University, 1931), p. 67.

<sup>36</sup> See comment by Jay Hayden, in "Mr. Hoover's Refusal to be Humanized," *Literary Digest*, July 25, 1931, p. 8.

surprised reporters by his garrulousness.<sup>37</sup> And newspapermen resented his denial of statements which he had made, blaming them for his own political errors.<sup>38</sup>

Herbert Hoover, too, was aware of the technique of press relations. As Secretary of Commerce, he had won many Washington correspondents by his personality and cooperation. He was considered the best "news-source" in Washington. His office in the Department of Commerce became a meeting place for newspapermen who wanted "inside" information about the politics and policies of the Harding administration.<sup>39</sup> It was only after Mr. Hoover, as President, alienated the press corps by a series of surprisingly inept acts that they turned against him. It was not that Mr. Hoover would not stoop to conquer; but that, once he was in the White House, he did not know how. He resorted to high-handed measures and a rank antagonizing of the correspondents which brought down a storm of protest.<sup>40</sup>

We have had no precedent of a President as sensitive to favorable publicity as Franklin D. Roosevelt, as skilled in his manipulation of opinion, or as favored with such winning personal traits. It is beside the point to rebuke the man for the utilization of those very characteristics which are a major reason for his political success. The press was not "prostituted" by the magic of Mr. Roosevelt's smile; nor was it hamstrung by any diabolism in his tactics.

In the very fervor with which he was delineated in the first days of his administration lies the animus for that reversion of sentiment which took place once it became clear that not even Mr. Roosevelt could fulfil the extravagant expectations of the newspapermen. They had accepted as real not merely their glorification of a man, but their fabrication of a superman. And no agnostic is so bitter as one disenchanted of a desperate and adolescent faith. It is of primary importance, in any analysis of Mr. Roosevelt and public opinion, to anatomize the forces which underlie the recent "debunking" trend. Responsibility is not to be placed solely upon either the President or the correspondents.

<sup>37</sup> J. Fred Essary, *Covering Washington* (Houghton-Mifflin, 1927), p. 91.

<sup>38</sup> See Villard, *op. cit.*, pp. 193ff; Silas Bent, *Ballyhoo* (Boni & Liveright, 1927), pp. 73-94.

<sup>39</sup> Paul Y. Anderson, *op. cit.*; *Washington Merry-Go-Round*, pp. 51-2, 56-60.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*; George H. Manning, *op. cit.*, *Editor and Publisher*, July 18, 1931, p. 10. Mr. Will Irwin states that after Hoover's decline in popularity with the corps, they "twisted" and "slanted" stories, giving an invidious turn to everything he said or did. See *Propaganda and the News* (McGraw-Hill, 1936), pp. 290-6.

## THE NATURE OF JOURNALISTIC PSYCHOLOGY

The technique of newspaper writing necessitates overstatement. Competition, in journalism, has been raised from the plane of speed in transmission to the plane of originality in interpretation. This competition, concentrated upon the interpretation of a common body of subject matter, places a premium upon spectacular judgments and bold "angles." In Washington this is particularly true: mass press conferences, "handouts," formalized departmental information services, and the excellent overall coverage of the press associations—these drive "special correspondents" into an emphasis upon original insights and interpretive acrobatics. Real "scoops" in Washington are uncommon. The struggle for the front page revolves around different "angles" extracted from the same general body of information, or the utilization of "private" news sources. The necessity of writing a story a day, even in the dullest periods, has pernicious consequences.

Competitive journalism, like competitive advertising, ends in the asseveration of impossible claims. But journalists, unlike copy-writers, are preoccupied with persons, not commodities; they are directly exposed to the influence of their subject matter. Reporters often come to believe in the very fictional qualities which they assign to public figures during that professional delirium which characterizes the daily meeting of deadlines. They are driven to overstatement because they are competing against overstatements. Men who operate in the realm of words unconsciously assign to the words they use a reality which transcends their intentions. In this context it was not Mr. Roosevelt who hypnotized the Washington correspondents: it was the Washington correspondents who hypnotized themselves.

More important, few newspapermen have a disciplined frame of reference within which to orient themselves, and within which to appraise the significance of men, methods, and goals. Of 127 Washington correspondents, 65 of whom have earned a four-year college degree, only four have specialized in political science or government in their college curricula; only three in economics.<sup>41</sup> Lest it be objected that this is an academic gauge the validity of which newspapermen would challenge, the writer wishes to emphasize the following fact: in an anonymous questionnaire submitted

<sup>41</sup> These facts and those following are taken from questionnaires filled out by 127 Washington correspondents for this writer, in the course of a fourteen-month study carried on in Washington under a fellowship of the Social Science Research Council.

to the same 127 Washington correspondents, they were asked to check their agreement or disagreement with the following statement: "I often feel the need of knowing more economics for my job." 86.6 per cent of those who answered said "Yes"; 10.6 per cent "No"; 2.6 per cent were uncertain. Prolonged interviews and personal contact with the Washington correspondents support these conclusions: a majority of the men in the press corps often feel inadequate to cope with the intricacies of news touching on economics, finance, money, the budget, etc. It was not uncommon to be told by correspondents that they felt the need of a wider, better disciplined background in the social sciences; that the character of "news" has changed markedly since 1933 so that, with the increasing emphasis upon economic affairs and social problems, the old "personality-party-politics" approach to Washington news is unsatisfactory. To men immersed in political events, the need of what we have called a "frame of reference within which to orient themselves" is acute. The lack of it leads to a purely impressionistic, surface interpretation of events, and an insecurity in the presence of social theories or political conceptualization. In this light the caustic reportorial attitude to "New Deal Professors," "The Brain Trust," and "wild theories" represents guilt and over-reaction.

The one measure of value which most newspapermen possess is the rod of success. Mr. Ashmun Brown has stated that, for the Washington correspondent, "The man who gets away with it is a good politician." This empirical standard does not create analytic judgments which have validity beyond the immediate day and the "successes" thereof. The necessity of making "snap decisions" several times a day, the constraints of the twenty-four hour cycle of time within which newspapermen work—these do not facilitate the application of "the long view." The press corps vested a great deal of emotional faith in Mr. Roosevelt; as long as he was a politician "getting away with it" that faith was justified. But when, in 1935 and 1936, Mr. Roosevelt began to meet formidable opposition from the Supreme Court, Congress, the Republicans, "Jeffersonian Democrats," and the whole wide front of private and semi-public groups who fought the President tooth and nail; when Mr. Roosevelt began to meet with a series of defeats or temporary setbacks, some of the Washington correspondents began to falter. The corps had greeted Mr. Roosevelt with frenzy in 1933; in it there was a will-to-believe which, because it ignored future possibilities and past experience, would end by tearing down the myth it was creating.

There is another point which is significant. The recent disillusionment with the President by newspapermen represents an externalization of

professional guilt. No idealization of the reporter is so dear to reporters themselves as that of a hard-boiled cynic, not to be wooed, won, or taken in by smooth words, clever techniques or calculated flattery. This professional stereotype, a kind of cherished *persona* (in Jung's meaning), exerts considerable influence in journalistic thought. It is, however, a myth. For the Washington correspondents *were* naïve, rather than hard-boiled, in the adulation which, upon their own initiative, they showered upon Mr. Roosevelt. They have offered ample evidence that they were "taken in" by the unquestionable charm of Mr. Roosevelt's manner and the heroic accents of his phrases. Having "betrayed" the objective function which they feel they must rigorously observe, the conscience of the correspondents acted with doubled vigor. Newspapermen added to a situation for which they held the President responsible, those discontents which might more legitimately have been directed against themselves. And this is improper, for in inter-personal relations, as in commerce, the admonition *caveat emptor* throws responsibility upon the gullible. A healthy proportion of the antagonism to Mr. Roosevelt was over-reaction by reporters who would have preferred that their earlier exaltations of the man might be removed from the record. They could not wipe out the emotional commitments of the past, but they intensified their efforts to compensate for them.

The deluge of government publicity had its effect, too.<sup>42</sup> It would have been superhuman for correspondents to resist the compelling attraction of achievements, plans and programs, which the different agencies of the New Deal ballyhooed in their press releases. To those in Washington with an impressionistic rather than an analytic approach to politics, it was difficult to view the Recovery Program and the dramaturgy of Mr. Roosevelt with cold, "objective" eyes. One commentator, after praising the President and his aides for their newspaper policy, and after granting the great service of the press releases, suggested that the administration was guilty of "more ruthlessness, intelligence, and subtlety in trying to suppress legitimate unfavorable comment than any other I have known."<sup>43</sup>

The Washington correspondents who yielded to *real* pressure in their recent anti-Roosevelt orientation should not be ignored. At least 85 per cent

<sup>42</sup> NRA issued 5,200 "handouts" in less than one year; see Berchtold, *op. cit.* To balance this, it should be noticed that complaints against "handouts" and government "propaganda" flourished during the Hoover administration, too. See J. Fred Essary, "Uncle Sam's Ballyhoo Men," *American Mercury*, August, 1931, pp. 419-28. Also *American Press*, July, 1931, p. 18.

<sup>43</sup> Arthur Krock, in speech cited above.



of the American press in the 1936 campaign was anti-Roosevelt editorially.<sup>44</sup> It can hardly be denied that the editorial stand influenced correspondents for many papers. The way in which newspaper stories were "played," drafting the news-columns into the service of the editorial page, by such papers as the *Chicago Tribune*, the Hearst newspaper chain, the *New York Herald-Tribune* and *Sun*, the *Detroit Free Press*, the *Los Angeles Times*, to suggest a few, indicates the psychological atmosphere in which some correspondents found themselves.<sup>45</sup> It is known that reporters for the Hearst newspapers were "estopped from writing anything that suggested even directly the possibility of Roosevelt's reelection."<sup>46</sup> It was only near the end of October that Mr. Hearst, in a confidential "rush" cable to all his editors, ordered his newspapers to be "impartial" and give news of Mr. Roosevelt equal prominence with news of Mr. Landon—beginning October 26, 1936.<sup>47</sup> A cursory glance at the format of the Hearst newspapers during September and October 1936, will suggest the psychological pressure to which the correspondents for Mr. Hearst were being exposed.

For all the prestige attached to his post, the Washington correspondent is an employee. Many of them consider it necessary to perform their jobs in a manner not displeasing to their superiors. An anti-Roosevelt publisher or editor would consider dispatches sympathetic to the President as "biased," not "objective"—i.e. not coincident with the publisher's or the editor's political orientation. This does not mean that every correspondent in the capital has trimmed his sails according to the preferences and prejudices of his superiors. Nor does it mean that "policy orders" have descended upon the newspaper offices in Washington. But it does mean that, varying with the correspondent and the character of his publisher, the economic realism of the newspaperman was, in many cases, reflected in his dispatches. In the words of one correspondent to this writer: "Experienced reporters don't need policy orders." In the words of another: "I'm sick of fighting my home office. I'm sick of being criticized, questioned, accused of being 'sold' on the New Deal. From now on *I'm giving my paper what it wants*. That's what I'm paid to do. If I didn't, they could fire me and get someone who would."

It is only just to state that many correspondents have not violated the ethic of their profession, partly because of their own courage and independence,

<sup>44</sup> See *Time*, November 2, 1936, pp. 12-14, for a lengthy analysis of newspaper politics in the 1936 campaign.

<sup>45</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>46</sup> Paul Ward, "Farley Captures Labor," *Nation*, October 31, 1936, p. 512.

<sup>47</sup> *Time*, November 2, 1936, p. 14.

partly because their publishers have not violated the ethic of *their* power.

Disappointment with the New Deal, displeasure with certain aspects of Mr. Roosevelt's press technique, overcompensation for what may be called "professional guilt," the heat of the election campaign which began in 1935, the editorial tone of their newspapers or the pressure (implicit or overt) of newspaper publishers—these suggest the forces which led Washington correspondents to inject a "slant" in their news-columns which was in sharp contrast to the eulogies of 1933 and 1934. It is probable that post-election guilts and the bitterness of those who felt they were being "forced" to write "anti-Roosevelt stuff to order" will produce a new pro-Roosevelt attitude. It will be the first phase of another cycle, recapitulating the cycle of 1933-1935. Given the nature of the journalistic process, the inter-personal relationship of the press conference and the psychology of newspapermen, Mr. Roosevelt stands on the brink of a new myth-making, myth-destroying period. A President by any other name would find himself in the same position.

# BRITISH PUBLIC OPINION AND FOREIGN POLICY

By HAROLD NICOLSON

Mr. Nicolson grew up in the atmosphere of public affairs and diplomacy, being the son of Sir Arthur Nicolson (later Lord Carnock), best known as British Ambassador to Russia 1906-1910 and as Permanent Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office 1910-1916. After being educated at Wellington and Balliol, Oxford, Mr. Nicolson himself entered the Diplomatic Service in 1909. He was a member of the British delegation to negotiate peace at Paris and an early official of the League of Nations. Twenty years later, being then Counsellor of the British Embassy in Berlin, he resigned in order to devote himself to literature and public affairs in England. He was elected to the House of Commons in 1935 as a National Labor member from the constituency of West Leicester. Besides earlier literary works on Tennyson, Byron, Swinburne, and Verlaine, Mr. Nicolson published in 1930 a life of his father and a study of the origins of the Great War, the American edition of which was entitled *Portrait of a Diplomatist*. He has subsequently published *Peacemaking 1919*; *Curzon: The Last Phase*; and *Dwight Morrow*.

All nice Englishmen believe in the "sound political instincts of the British people." From our very cradles we have been taught the art of self-controlled mediocrity; at school we endured a process, known as "the formation of character," under which we learned that all expressions of extreme opinion were unworthy of a scholar or a gentleman; and at the university we imbibed Whig history, and acquired the conviction that British democracy was the finest and the most enduring in the world. We were not encouraged to examine these assumptions. It seldom occurred to us to inquire upon what this famous democratic instinct was based. And now that the whole principle of democracy is being challenged, with glittering success, upon the Continent we are apt to fly to the other extreme and to contend that the whole theory of our democratic instinct is a Whig fantasy and that in fact our electorate are as selfish, as emotional, and as unreflecting as any other.

I do not share this pessimism. I admit of course that until the war Great Britain was not in fact a democracy but an oligarchy under which a certain group of party leaders, educated at Eton and Oxford, would from time to time transfer the fruits and ordeals of government to another group of party

leaders, educated at Harrow and Cambridge. I admit also that the legend of the "sound political instincts of the British people" was fostered by our bourgeoisie, partly in order to lull the proletariat into acquiescence and partly in order to fortify their own confidence and complacency. The phrase, none the less, does signify something recognizable and real. I have no doubt myself that the mass of the British people are more "sensible" than the mass of voters in other democracies. Upon what does this much-vaunted "common sense" repose? To a certain extent, it must be confessed, it is based upon our intellectual lethargy, our hatred of the unfamiliar, our distrust of innovation, our indolent preference for the ills we know of rather than the unknown virtues of a new experiment. Yet it is not enough to contend that the stability of the British character is composed of laziness and stupidity. These defects in our national temperament may perhaps maintain that stability. But its chief components are our main national virtues—tolerance, trustfulness, patience, good temper, and a basic caution.

It is against these virtues that Marxist propaganda in this country directs its main efforts. Tolerance is attacked as a bourgeois weakness, trustfulness is condemned as an example of slave mentality, patience is derided as the last resort of the feeble, good temper is spurned as the enemy of class solidarity, and caution is ridiculed as a *rentier* vice. It would be foolish to deny that this propaganda is having a certain effect, above all among our younger men and women. Yet the penetration of such foreign conceptions into the psychology of the British people is impeded by one of our qualities which, although secondary, is very impervious. I refer to our sense of humor. Of all our qualities this is the most uniform and the most widely distributed through all classes; it is the great leveler and the great prophylactic; into this vast sandbag of humor the arrows of Rome, Moscow, and Berlin plunge without effect and even the very real indignation aroused by Sir Oswald Mosley's tactics is predominantly an amused indignation. So long as our humor endures, our good humor will survive with it; and no revolution can attain to violence in a general atmosphere of good humor. Hatred is not an emotion which lasts for long on British soil. It ends in laughter.

Let us, none the less, avoid self-satisfaction. The qualities which I have indicated, valuable though they be as political and social assets, are not the highest qualities (in that they are negative) of which the human soul is capable. Nor, in a world of fear and anger, can we count with complacent certitude upon their permanence. And as an indication that the "sound

political instincts" which they undoubtedly produce may not in every case be wholly reliable instincts, I would cite the strange emotional fluctuations in British opinion in regard to foreign affairs. In this area, at least, the British people have not displayed that "common sense" for which in domestic politics they are justly admired. How comes it that in regard to foreign policy the British people have of late behaved with foolish intemperance? That is the problem which I wish to examine in this paper.

### FOREIGN POLICY POPULARIZED

The first suggestion that I have to make is that the British people have not yet acquired the habit of judgment in regard to foreign policy. In domestic affairs they have for generations been politically minded and have learned that black is never wholly black or white wholly white. In foreign affairs this habit of judgment has yet to be attained. Since only within the last few years have the British public been the true and direct sovereign of their own foreign policy.

This fact is not always appreciated, even in this country. It requires some examination. In the old oligarchic days before the war, there was a tacit understanding that foreign policy should not in general be a subject for party controversy. True it is that the Liberals would from time to time embark upon an anti-Turkish or an anti-Russian campaign, whereas the Conservatives would from time to time accuse their opponents of being "Little Englanders" and "unpatriotic." Yet, by and large, the conduct of foreign policy was taken out of party controversy and was conducted on a system of implicit, and at times explicit, understanding between the leaders of the Government and the leaders of the opposition. How was this agreement, this understanding—which was referred to as "the continuity of our foreign policy"—achieved? It was achieved because there did in fact exist no profound divergence of opinion as to the objectives of that policy. Those objectives were defined in the phrase, "The protection of British rights and interests."

Certain assumptions, in other words, were common to all shades of opinion in the country. The security of Great Britain and her empire must be maintained against all possible enemies. Such maintenance could be secured only by our command of the seas. The maritime supremacy which we were bound to acquire and to exercise entailed, however, certain responsibilities. It must be benevolent and not provocative; it must be exercised in the interests of the smaller powers in order that world indignation should



never be aroused against it. This supremacy did in fact create a species of *Pax Britannica*, which, although irritating and sometimes galling, was never intolerable. The British people understood the implications of this simple formula. The Navy meant for them, not pride and power only, but also personal security. Satisfied as they were with the main objectives of our foreign policy, the British people were glad to leave its execution to the experts under the direction of the Government in power.

The latter, for their part, also worked on certain assumptions. They assumed that the *Pax Britannica* was the agreed objective of all foreign policy. They assumed that whatever diplomatic engagements or treaties might be necessary for the protection and furtherance of the *Pax Britannica* would without question be approved by the electorate as a whole. And they took it for granted that, should circumstances require them to play the last card in foreign policy, namely the card of force, the public would automatically support them even if it came to war.

Three important developments have since occurred to weaken these assumptions. The submarine and the airplane have shown us that maritime supremacy no longer provides that absolute security, that complete unassailability, which we enjoyed before the war. The rapid expansion of aerial methods of warfare, and especially the dreaded implications of aerial bombardment, have convinced the British people that any future war will not be an affair of professional fighters but an affair by which every citizen will be directly menaced. And the dread of diplomatic entanglements has diminished confidence in a Cabinet foreign policy and increased (to my mind rightly) the demand for direct popular control over that policy. The old days when the British public felt so secure in their island that they were content to leave their external relations to the Government of the day are now passed forever. The British public today claims to exercise direct, and not merely indirect, sovereign powers in regard to foreign policy. Our external relations have thus been brought down from the cabinet room to the arena of party controversy; and the press as well as the propagandists have joined in the fray.

The results of these first struggles in the fight for democratic control have not been encouraging to those who wish to see that control established, or even to those who like to believe that the "sound political instincts of the British people" can be relied on in external, as readily as in domestic, affairs. Let us examine some examples of the confusion which has resulted.

The period immediately following upon the World War is not a period of which any country has cause to feel proud. It is not quite fair to judge British

opinion during those shell-shocked years and it must be conceded that, of all European countries, we were the first to recover some measure of sanity. British public opinion was correct in opposing the Ruhr invasion and correct in welcoming the Locarno treaties. The fluctuation of opinion during those years of nervous debility does not, however, offer a reliable field of investigation. I prefer to choose as my areas of examination three more recent phases, namely—the "Peace Ballot" of 1934, the Abyssinian episode of 1935, and the Spanish Civil War of 1936. It will be from an examination of these three specimens that I shall draw my conclusions.

### THE "PEACE BALLOT"

In the years following on 1930 certain sections of opinion in Great Britain began an agitation for an isolationist policy on the analogy of the United States. As a corollary to their plea for "no European entanglements" they were led into opposition to the League of Nations and they clamored that our commitments under the Covenant should be restricted or even disavowed. The more extreme sections, headed by Lord Beaverbrook, had suggested even that we should withdraw from the League and concern ourselves henceforward with purely British interests.

It was claimed that this movement had gathered considerable force, and that against the onslaughts of such realism, such enlightened self-interest, the flimsy fabric of Geneva idealism could put up no defense. This supposition was incorrect. The League of Nations Union—a powerful organization under the direction of Lord Cecil—decided to hold a ballot in order to ascertain whether the British public were in fact weakening in their allegiance to the League of Nations. The methods and results of that ballot were most illuminating.

The Union prepared five questions which it circulated to its branches throughout the country. Local organizers, with amazing energy, conducted a house-to-house canvass. Some eleven and a half million voters responded to this inquiry. Let us examine how they voted in each case.

The first question was "Should Great Britain remain a member of the League of Nations?" To this question 355,883 voters answered "No" and 11,090,387 answered "Yes." The second question was "Are you in favor of an all-round reduction of armaments by international agreement?" To this 862,775 answered "No" and 10,470,489 answered "Yes." The third question was "Are you in favor of the all-round abolition of national military and naval aircraft by international agreement?" Here, strangely enough, the Noes were as many as 1,689,786, whereas the Ayes were 9,533,558. The

fourth question was "Should the manufacture and sale of armaments for private profit be prohibited by international agreement?" Here the Ayes were 10,417,329 and the Noes 775,415. The fifth question was divided into two parts. It was drafted as follows: "Do you consider that, if a nation insists on attacking another, the other nations should combine to compel it to stop—(a) by economic and non-military measures, (b) if necessary, military measures?" To 5(a) the answers were 10,027,608 "Yes" and 635,074 "No," whereas to 5(b) the answers were 6,784,368 "Yes" and as many as 2,351,981 "No."

The result of this "Peace Ballot" was hailed by its promoters as positive proof that an overwhelming majority of the British people were in favor of the League and disarmament and would be prepared to defend the Covenant, if necessary, by recourse to war. A few disagreeable cynics, none the less, suggested that the British public, as a whole, were not certain for what, in fact, they had been voting. The fact, for instance, that the ballot was (at least in its initial stages) called the "Peace Ballot" gave to many ignorant voters the impression that the issue on which they were being asked to record their opinion was one between peace and war. The proportions of affirmative and negative votes recorded under Question 5(a) and 5(b) indicated again that, although a majority of the people would be in favor of applying economic sanctions against the aggressor, a very large minority were not prepared to push those sanctions to the point of war. This impression was confirmed, in the minds of the skeptics, by a further circumstance. In the borough of Ilford a similar ballot had been held some months before the main ballot. The Ilford questionnaire contained, as question No. 3, the pertinent inquiry: "Do you agree with that part of the Locarno Treaty which binds Great Britain to go to the help of France or Germany if the one is attacked by the other?" The Ilford voting on this question was extremely informative. Although 5,898 voters were prepared to stand by our Locarno commitments, as many as 18,498, or a two-thirds majority, declared that they would do nothing of the sort. When the League of Nations Union came to conduct their own ballot, upon a national basis, they omitted this awkward Ilford question and substituted for it a double question which they described as "wider and more inclusive." But to those who knew about the answers which had been returned to the Ilford question these evasions were not very convincing.

I am not, of course, suggesting any lack of good faith on the part of the League of Nations Union, an organization to which I myself have the honor to belong. I am suggesting only that many of the votes then given

were discounted by cautious observers and that it remained doubtful whether any large majority of the British public would in fact be in favor of risking a second European war in a case where the principles of the League Covenant might be endangered but in which the direct interests of the British Empire were not concerned. The more skeptical among us hailed the ballot as a demonstration that the British people were overwhelmingly pacifist. Yet at the same time we distrusted it as an indication that the public supported the League so long as it stood for peace and disarmament and would not support it once it became clear that the defense of the Covenant might lead to war.

These impressions were confirmed by the opportunities afforded for testing the public mind during the General Election of 1935. I myself received from a constituent the following letter:

Dear Sir,

Can you assure me that you stand for the League of Nations and Collective Security and will oppose any entanglements in Europe?

At several meetings held in my constituency and elsewhere I read that letter aloud and watched carefully for a response. Only in rare and isolated cases did my audience at once see that the above formula was self-contradictory nonsense. My experience with this letter convinced me that the Peace Ballot (valuable though it had been) was not a considered expression of national determination, but an expression of ill-considered national desires. In other words, it expressed what the whole country wanted to *happen*: it did not express what they were prepared to *do*.

These doubts were again confirmed by the fluctuations of British opinion over the Abyssinian and the Rhineland episodes.

## REVOLT ON ABYSSINIA

In the year following the great Peace Ballot of 1934, two events occurred which exposed British public opinion to a severe test. The first of these events was Mussolini's aggression against Abyssinia. In September 1935 the British Foreign Secretary, Sir Samuel Hoare, pledged the British Government to the defense of the Covenant in the face of this outrage, and there are some who contend that this assurance brought many votes to the National Government in the General Election of the following November.

By then, however, certain diplomatic difficulties had intervened. Mussolini intimated that he was determined to defy the authority of the League and would go to war with France and Great Britain sooner than submit to the dictation of Geneva. The French, fearing for the Stresa front which they had

just created against Germany, and aware that war with Italy would be profoundly resented by the French public, endeavored to compromise. They induced Sir Samuel Hoare in December to agree to a "compromise solution" known as the Hoare-Laval agreement under which Mussolini was to be given some two-thirds of Abyssinia while the Negus was to be allowed to retain the rest in independent, or semi-independent, sovereignty.

Scarcely half an hour after this agreement was known in London, public opinion rose in revolt. The lobbies of the House of Commons buzzed with anger and within a few minutes it became evident that either Sir Samuel Hoare and his agreement must be jettisoned or the Government would fall. Bowing to the storm, Mr. Baldwin dismissed his Foreign Secretary, and the agreement became null and void. A few months later, Mussolini annexed the whole of Abyssinia and the Negus fled to Europe.

It was felt at the time that this remarkable explosion of public opinion, this direct exercise of democratic control over foreign policy, proved that the Peace Ballot had been a clear indication of the national will and that the electorate were in fact ready to risk war on behalf of the League Covenant. Here again the skeptics were doubtful. They suggested that much of the public indignation against the Hoare-Laval agreement resulted from hatred of Mussolini and fascism rather than from readiness to fight for the League. They suggested also that the public (owing to their ignorance on such matters) were not afraid of Italy and were under the impression that an Italian war would entail only the dispatch of a brigade or two to Egypt and some short naval actions in the Eastern Mediterranean. The British Government (rightly or wrongly) thought otherwise. They knew that war with Italy would entail the bombardment of Malta, and perhaps even of London: they knew it would entail trouble in Egypt, Palestine, and the Yemen: they knew that we were not equipped to face an aerial war with Italy without heavy naval losses: they knew that France would be split from top to bottom and would probably back out of the venture from fear of the destruction of Toulon and Marseilles; and they dreaded lest Germany might profit by all these difficulties to join forces with Italy. They may well have been justified in such forebodings. That is not the point I wish to consider. The point is that, in spite of all such dangers, British opinion was, in December 1935, prepared to go to war with Mussolini in order to defend the Covenant.

It is said, of course, that our real motives were imperialistic and that we opposed the Italian conquest of Abyssinia because of its possible effect upon our position in Egypt and the Red Sea. This is an incorrect interpretation. In the first place the mass of the British people cared little for Egypt and less



for the Yemen. In the second place the experts, who knew about these things, were on the whole in favor of Italy's obtaining Abyssinia. Thus it was not the imperialists who wanted to fight for Abyssinia but the left-wing pacifists. This strange anomaly will again be examined when we come to consider British opinion and the Spanish Civil War.

The above examination of the Peace Ballot and the Abyssinian episode leads us to two conclusions. First, that although British opinion was overwhelmingly in favor of the League of Nations, it supported the Covenant rather in the hope of avoiding war than with the determination to enforce peace. Secondly, that the willingness of left-wing opinion to fight Mussolini over Abyssinia was partly anti-Fascist in origin and might have been modified (or even reversed) once it was found that the defeat of Mussolini would require something more than a naval demonstration off the Gulf of Spezzia. These conclusions were confirmed by the strange manifestations of public opinion which followed upon the German occupation of the Rhineland in March of this year.

It might have been supposed that this arrogant defiance of a treaty which Germany had signed of her own free will and which brought her many compensations would have been regarded by British opinion as a violation of contract comparable to the Italian aggression against Abyssinia. Such was not the case. British opinion, on the contrary, contended from the first that the Germans were justified in their action and much bitterness was felt against the French for appealing to us to honor our Locarno obligations.

The implications are obvious. The British people felt that to insist upon the sanctity of treaties in the case of Germany might expose us to a second German war, which, to the mass of the people, suggests the bombardment of London from the air. The prospect of a war with Italy carried with it no such immediate menace. The change in their attitude was thus, essentially, dictated by fear, and since it is never pleasant to admit such a motive, the public escaped from such an admission by indulging in an anti-French agitation and by proclaiming that the Germans had been shamefully treated in 1919 and were fully justified in reversing such treatment.

## **SHATTERING EFFECT OF THE SPANISH CIVIL WAR**

It has already been suggested that a large element in the pro-Abyssinian and pro-League agitation of December 1935 was represented by left-wing hatred of fascism. The Nazis, in that they are far more formidable, are less overtly attacked. This tendency to allow sectional or class sympathies to

supersede the old simple formula of "British rights and interests" has been much increased by events of the Spanish Civil War.

Left-wing opinion in this country is instructed in the Marxist dialectic. They are taught to believe that the foreign policy of any capitalist state must be governed by material considerations, and that the sympathies of the present Government must inevitably be pro-German, pro-Italian, pro-Franco, and anti-Russian, anti-French, and anti-Azaña. The fact that our imperialist interests would tend to align even right-wing sympathies against Germany and Italy and to induce even the most ardent Tory to dread the establishment of another Fascist state in the Mediterranean, does not convince them. Marx has said that the foreign policy of any capitalist government must be dictated by economic interest alone. And Marx must be right. Thus when they observe Mr. Anthony Eden trying his best to steer a middle course between two extremes, they do not laud his moderation, they merely distrust his intentions. These are the considerations which govern the bewildering uncertainty of our Labor leaders in such matters as rearmament and neutrality in the Spanish conflict. They themselves know that in face of a rearmed Germany some measure of rearmament on our part is absolutely essential. They themselves know that intervention on the side of the Spanish Government would provoke immediate and more effective intervention from Germany and Italy in aid of Franco. Yet the rank and file of the Labor Party still fear that our new armaments may one day be used against Holy Russia or on the side of Unholy Italy, and they still believe that it is the duty of all British workers to assist their comrades in Spain even at the risk of provoking counter-intervention and a possible general conflagration.

Upon the extreme right, again, the Spanish conflict has had a damaging effect. "You see," they exclaim, "it is always the same. Liberal coalitions always fall victims to their own left wings. Let us away with all coalitions and compromises and fight the battle squarely as between the right and the left." There is thus a danger that British opinion will repudiate, not merely the old simple formula of British rights and interests, but even the middle course which Anthony Eden represents. The old security, the old isolation, the old tolerant and generous self-sufficiency have been much diminished by our extreme susceptibility to attack from the air. The old blind confidence in the Government and the experts has also diminished. The old unity which was defined by the word "patriotism" is being split by other loyalties and other creeds. Feeling that the old center of gravity has somehow shifted, British opinion oscillates from one emotion to another. Our former stability in regard to foreign policy would, for the moment, appear to have been lost.

I do not deny these dangers and in fact I spare no occasion to point them out to my countrymen. Yet the foreign observer is, I believe, apt to exaggerate their importance, their permanence, and their extent. In the first place the great majority of British opinion remains solid, inarticulate, and traditional: it is the vocal minorities which cause alarm. In the second place, as I have said, the present generation have no experience of popular sovereignty in foreign affairs and have not yet acquired in that area the balance of judgment that they possess in regard to domestic affairs. In the third place, the sense of insecurity is a new and terrifying element in our national consciousness and for the moment it has upset our nerves. And in the fourth place it is the deliberate policy of the dictator states to keep the western democracies on the jump.

Yet the British temperament is not a nervous temperament. I am confident that in a few years we shall recapture our former equanimity and the peculiar British virtues which derive from it. I believe also that the attraction of foreign formulas, whether from Berlin or from Moscow, is rapidly losing its effect, and that a reaction will before long drive opinion back into our native habit of compromise, gradualness, and the middle path between extremes. I have little doubt that in a very short time the British public will realize that emotionalism can lead only to the confusion of foreign policy, and will return to the doctrine of enlightened self-interest and realistic humanitarianism. Nor can I conceive it possible that the peoples of this Empire would for long repudiate the traditions of our past magnitude or fear the vastness of our shadow on the world.

# EDITORIAL POLICIES OF BROADCASTING COMPANIES

By MERRILL DENISON

Mr. Denison's published works include fiction, non-fiction, plays, radio plays, text-books, motion picture scenarios, and articles in both technical and popular magazines. He has been associated with the Columbia Broadcasting System and the National Broadcasting Company as a specialist on radio drama, and has also served as technical adviser to the National Advisory Committee on Radio and Education. Although writing has been his principal activity in the last fifteen years, he began his career as a practising architect in New York and Boston, after study at the University of Toronto, the University of Pennsylvania, and Columbia University. His interest in writing dates from 1921 when he became art director of Hart House Theater at the University of Toronto.

Frequent controversies in the press about free speech and censorship in radio illustrate how little is known of the inner workings of broadcasting companies in the United States. Many factors have helped to make the public's understanding of broadcasting operations confused and inexact. The mushroom growth of the industry has been in part responsible. The very nature of the radio program makes it a thing of immediate interest, something to be discussed at the moment or not at all. The attitude of the press toward its alleged rival has not lessened the confusion. There has been criticism, it is true, but little or no revealing explanation. The broadcasting companies themselves have adhered to a policy which has permitted the more determined critics of American radio to appear before the public as its most voluble interpreters. Further confusion has arisen from the lack of a precise radio terminology which will differentiate broadcasting operations and techniques from those of the show business and the publishing business.

## EARLY HAPHAZARD DEVELOPMENT

Looking back to the close of the World War, the beginnings of broadcasting in America seem astonishingly haphazard and accidental. Great technical advances had taken place between 1914 and 1918, but the return of peace revealed a patent situation so involved, so apparently hopeless of solution, that commercial exploitation of radio inventions seemed virtually impossible. At this point, the Federal Government stepped in to rationalize

the tangled radio situation. At the instigation of President Wilson the Navy Department used its influence to bring about the transfer of patents, stations, and equipment of the British-owned American Marconi Company to an American-owned corporation created for that purpose—the Radio Corporation of America, which formed, with the General Electric Company, the nucleus of America's radio industry. This nucleus was augmented, again at the instigation of the Federal Government, in January 1920, by the addition of the American Telephone and Telegraph Company and the Westinghouse Electric Company. By July 1921, agreements were executed among these four companies which provided for the exchange of cross-licenses which established the foundations of broadcasting in the United States.

At this time, of course, there was little or no realization of the rapidity with which the importance of broadcasting as an agency of mass entertainment would overshadow the importance of radio as an agency of point-to-point communication. The first radio telephone experiments had been undertaken by Fessenden in 1905 between Annapolis and Washington. By 1910, DeForest was broadcasting operatic selections from the Metropolitan Opera with an arc-type transmitter. In 1914, E. H. Armstrong's announcement of the vacuum tube marked an important advance in the art, and by 1916, DeForest was transmitting speech and music from an experimental station at High Bridge, New York.

Closed down while the United States was at war, the DeForest station resumed experimental broadcasts in 1919. In the interim, a great increase in the number of radio amateurs had taken place, partly because of the romantic stories of radio's part in the war, partly because of the men who had served as signallers in the army or navy. This potential market prompted the manufacture of amateur and experimental radio telephone transmitters of low power, and one of these sets was sold to the *Detroit Daily News* which began sending out news bulletins in August 1920. The imagination of the public had yet to be seized, however, by the miracles already known to the laboratory.

In the meantime, the Westinghouse Company, in association with the U.S. Signal Corps, had carried on radio telephone experiments all through the war. From 1919 on, phonograph records, talks, and baseball and football scores were transmitted between two stations in Pittsburgh. The public interest in these programs inspired an enterprising store—the Joseph Horne Company—to advertise a sale of radio receiving sets for the reception of the programs being broadcast daily. The public response to this advertisement



in turn led to the inauguration of a public broadcasting service on November 2, 1920, with the historic broadcast of President Harding's election. The success of this initial experiment led Westinghouse to build other transmitters—WBZ at Springfield, WJZ at Newark, KYW at Chicago, all in 1921. By the spring of 1922, the operations of these stations aroused the nationwide interest that marks the true beginnings of both the set-manufacturing industry and of the broadcasting industry, the latter being an outcome of the former, but each being an essential corollary of the other.

No scientific experiment in history ever received such an eager public response as did radio in the years following 1922. From a handful of manufacturers in 1921, the numbers had grown by 1924 to 3,000 manufacturers of parts for home assembly and 300 set-manufacturers, most of whom engaged in flagrant patent infringement. Simultaneously came a tremendous increase in the number of broadcasting stations. The half-dozen of 1921 grew to over 400 by 1925. Most of them were erected by commercial interests—newspapers, department stores, radio set manufacturers—for good-will and prestige purposes. Others were put into operation by colleges, municipalities, religious organizations, quick to appreciate the economies afforded by the new medium in carrying their particular messages to the public. The period was one of high enthusiasm but almost incredible chaos during which manufacturers, broadcasters, talent, listeners, and the Department of Commerce joined hands in hopeful but entirely bewildered experiment.

## **BROADCASTING PATTERNS TAKE SHAPE**

With the arrival of sets suitable for mass distribution, the entire character of the broadcasting picture began to change and new problems to emerge. Prior to that time, listeners had found their great enjoyment in dialing distant stations, happily indifferent to the quality or interest of the programs they plucked from the air. Improved receiving instruments brought demands for better programs. The fans' postcards asking for station confirmation began to bear criticism as well as praise. Well-financed broadcasters, interested only in the prestige value of their radio operations, and the wealthier set-manufacturers, aware that their commercial future depended entirely on continued public interest in programs, sought to meet the new demands, improve programs, and offer better balanced schedules.

Almost immediately, a new and unforeseen difficulty arose. Prior to this time, say early in 1925, artists, musicians, actors, and professional performers had been willing to donate their services without charge in the interests

of science and whatever attendant publicity might accrue. Under the spur of competition broadcasters increased their demands on the free talent, asked for more and better broadcasts, more rehearsal time. Realizing suddenly that other than purely scientific considerations were involved in their appearances before the microphone, artists now demanded payment for their services. A new financial burden was added to the overhead of the already precarious economics of the unstabilized industry. Some station owners withdrew from broadcast operation; the more skilfully managed stations rapidly forged ahead in public esteem; poorly financed stations belonging to churches, religious organizations, colleges, soon found themselves at a disadvantage in attracting and holding an audience.

The period is an important one, for during it the patterns of American broadcasting took definite shape. Among other things, it was a period devoted to program experiment, to discovering just what the radio listener—the set buyer—wanted radio to give him. The exigencies of program competition soon established the fact that all but a trifling minority of listeners wanted entertainment. Except for scattered intellectuals and educators, little or no interest was evidenced by the public at large in the new medium as an agency with unlimited potentialities for mass enlightenment. Inevitably, broadcasters followed the lead given them and provided entertainment. Costs began to rise alarmingly and new means of financing the whole Aladdin-like industry were sought. Suggestions that set-manufacturers underwrite program costs proved impractical. Appeals to listeners for voluntary donations to defray expenses met with no response. Other schemes were broached and abandoned.

The way out of the economic impasse came in 1925 when Station WEAJ announced that its facilities could be hired by any reputable person for broadcasting purposes. The presence of the word "reputable" in the announcement suggests editorial policy in embryo. It also points clearly to a desire on the part of the broadcasting station to guard against offending public opinion. Slowly at first and then in increasing numbers, buyers of radio time appeared and found broadcasting an effective advertising medium. Naturally, these advertisers gravitated to the stations which seemed to promise the largest probable audiences. To increase the audiences, more appealing programs were devised and professionals from theater, concert hall, and vaudeville were employed to perfect them. The programs had one positive purpose and one only: to attract listeners by offering entertainment. The negative proscription was equally definite: true to the logic of adver-

tising dogma, the programs might contain nothing that could offend a potential buyer of the advertiser's product.

Commercial program sponsorship solved one problem only to disclose another. The question of paying for talent was settled, but it was shortly discovered that most of the acceptable talent resided in New York. Successful broadcasting operation evidently required a single point of origin and numerous outlets strategically located throughout the country. Technically, the problem presented no difficulties; experimental hook-ups had been made successfully many times before 1926. Economically, the outlook was much more dubious. Bolder advertisers, however, made the experiment of linking scattered stations together with land telephone wires, and then broadcasting programs originating in New York. The costs were not prohibitive and public approval was far more enthusiastic than had been anticipated.

Early in 1926, it was evident that the nationwide pattern of American broadcasting must include permanently organized networks if the possibilities of radio were to be fully realized and if the interests of the public, the broadcasting companies and the advertisers were to be served as fully as the technical advances of the art permitted. As a result, the networks came into being, first the National Broadcasting Company in 1926 and a year later the Columbia Broadcasting System. With the introduction of the commercial sponsor and the creation of the networks, the significant patterns, operating methods, and policy determinants of American broadcasting were definitely established. To the framework of the structure initially inspired by a war-conscious government seven years earlier, private initiative and enterprise had added walls and a roof.

## DETERMINANTS OF EDITORIAL POLICY

Prior to the introduction of commercial sponsorship no need for editorial policy existed. Shouldering all the costs, the broadcaster was responsible to no one and was exposed to no influences which determined the type of programs he chose to put on the air.

*Government Regulation.* The only regulatory legislation in existence was a Federal Act passed in 1912 to govern ship-to-shore communication and shore wireless station operation. This act did little more than provide for the licensing of stations, the approval of wave-lengths and the allotting of call letters. Interpreting its provisions to include broadcasting, which had never been heard of at the time of the writing of the act, the Department

of Commerce passed on applications for licenses, approving or disapproving of these as it saw fit.

Once granted a license, a broadcaster was free to operate pretty much as his fancy guided him. Beyond the Act of 1912, there were no laws affecting broadcasting except the general legal proscriptions relating to publishing in any form: those prohibiting obscenity, profanity, libel, slander, and so forth. With the observance of these, the broadcaster's social and community obligations ended.

Under the original Act of 1912 even the power of the Department of Commerce to control frequencies was disputed by certain station owners. In a decision handed down by a Federal Court in Chicago in 1925, the dispute was settled in favor of the recalcitrant companies with the result that listening conditions became increasingly unsatisfactory due to the number of stations and the use of conflicting frequencies.

To deal with this condition the Federal Radio Act of 1927 was passed, which created the Federal Radio Commission with powers to license stations, allocate and control frequencies, and generally to act in the capacity of a traffic cop of the air and its thoroughfares or wave-lengths. The most important feature of this act was the introduction of the phrase common to utility legislation, "the public interest, convenience, and necessity" as the guiding factor in the issuance, renewal, and cancellation of station licenses.

While this provision has been discussed as having a most important bearing on broadcasting policies, it actually introduced no new determinant but only fortified those already existing. In other words, it increased the sensitivity of the broadcaster to the reactions of the audience, since it provided a means by which any section of the public might effectively press for the termination of a broadcaster's license. Beyond requiring that radio stations serve "the public interest, convenience, and necessity," refrain from broadcasting false distress signals, grant to all official candidates for public office equal opportunities in the use of facilities, and abstain from the promotion of lotteries or other similar schemes, the legislation of 1927, and that of 1934 under which the Federal Communications Commission was created, did not materially affect broadcasting practices or policies.

*Radio Audience.* The arrival of commercial sponsorship immediately modified the chaotic situation, serving as a rationalizing influence which tended to lessen the irresponsibility of the station owner and to bring about the evolution of operating techniques and the formulation of policies, editorial and otherwise. The reasons for these developments are obvious. While the broadcasting station owner, using his own time for his own purposes,

might generally concern himself with his listeners' reactions, the same broadcaster, selling time to an advertising sponsor, had to concern himself very acutely with his listeners' reactions if he wished to go on selling time, for upon the approval and extent of the listening audience depended both the salability of his time and the price he could command for it. Thus commercial sponsorship made the listener the basic economic determinant of broadcasting policy. The influence of the audience on the quality of programs has often been pointed out, generally to the discredit of the audience. Of much greater importance has been its influence in the moulding and crystallization of policy.

*Economic Self-Interest.* The logic of the situation, as it existed immediately following the creation of the networks, would suggest that there existed no reason for conflict between the broadcasting company and the commercial buyer of its time. Both were interested primarily in the good-will of listeners: enlightened self-interest on the part of each should have operated to bring about complete cooperation and a single point of view. This theoretical ideal did not materialize. While a majority of advertisers used the new medium with intelligence there was the usual percentage, common to all American industries, who refused to be governed by any consideration but their own immediate selfish interest. The tendency of this minority was progressively to damage the broadcaster's most essential asset: his listeners' good-will. So it was that broadcasting companies found themselves forced into a position where economic self-interest made them a referee between the interests of their audience and the interests of their cash customers.

It was a complex and difficult position but, when its full implications are realized, one which explains completely the tardiness with which definite policies emerged. As a referee between listener and sponsor, the broadcaster's own interests were indubitably identified with those of the listener. But with operating revenues and ultimate profits coming directly from the sponsor, the broadcaster dared not formulate too rigid policies to control the sponsor so long as the broadcasting industry was in a formative stage; that is so long as there was more time to sell than there were sponsors to buy it. The growth of policies, then, has directly paralleled the economic growth of the industry, with the broadcasting companies assuming a greater measure of control over their medium as their economic position became more secure.

The intermediate period was inevitably one of temporizing and expediency in the formulation of policy. This resulted not alone from the conflict between audience and maverick sponsor, in which the broadcasting companies were forced to assume the unenviable rôle of the twice-interested



judge, but also from the difficulty of establishing with any degree of precision what the reactions of the listeners actually were. Unlike the theater, with its box office, or the magazine with its paid circulation and newsstand sales, radio must grope by complicated and diffuse devices toward any estimate of its own success. Fan mail, surveys of listeners, newspaper comment, the criticisms of interested and disinterested pressure groups—all of these served as indications, but neither singly nor together gave completely definite clues for the adoption of policies to govern broadcasting. As a result, a period of tentative fumbling toward policies ensued during which the broadcasting companies sought on the one hand to protect their equity in their listeners' good-will and on the other hand to do nothing that would alienate the continued support of sponsors, since both were essential to the success of broadcasting as a commercial enterprise. This phase, it is readily seen, had to continue until two conditions had been satisfied; first the crystallization of public opinion in regard to broadcasting—an opinion so positive that it admitted of no misinterpretation—and second, the strengthening of the financial position of broadcasting by having more buyers for time than there was time to sell.

*Commercial Advertising.* Another important determinant which further complicated the position of the broadcasting company was contributed by commercial sponsorship in the manner in which it affected the inner workings of the companies. When time was first offered for sale, it was expected that the broadcasting company, having the organization, the technical experience, and the studios, would continue to create and produce the programs designed for the entertainment of listeners, and that the sponsor would pay the costs of these programs, finding advertising value in the inclusion of a brief announcement of his sponsorship, since at that time, no one imagined that radio entertainment could be other than a complimentary gesture on the part of affluent advertisers toward the listening audience.

Very rapidly, however, its direct advertising values were realized, and sponsors in increasing numbers turned to their advertising agencies for counsel in choosing and producing effective radio programs. The intricate problems involved in radio production soon resulted in many agencies, acting for their clients, taking over the entire work of preparing and broadcasting programs and only renting studio facilities, transmitter time, and certain technical assistance from the broadcasting station. As a result, two distinctly different types of program, from the standpoint of origin and control, came into being: the commercial program and the sustaining program.

Generally speaking, the listeners do not bother to differentiate between the two, regarding origin as of minor importance. This tendency has been fortified by the practice of radio stations to sign off programs, sustaining and commercial, with a single phrase which identifies station and broadcasting company, without discriminating as to whether the program has been a production of the company itself as part of its service to listeners, whether it has been a production of some sponsor, or whether it has been produced by the company for the sponsor. Whether this lack of differentiation is any longer a matter of moment is a debatable question but the different functions imposed on the broadcasting companies by the two kinds of programs had important effects in typing the characteristics of American broadcasting.

Functioning as the lessor of time and facilities to commercial advertisers, the broadcasting company had to guard, so far as it felt its economic position enabled it to do so, against any sponsor broadcasting anything which jeopardized the good-will of the audience. Functioning in his capacity as part of a national radio service, the intelligent broadcaster had to provide sustaining programs which would increasingly enhance the good-will. And since the commercial sponsor, particularly in the earlier days, was interested solely in popular entertainment which seemed likely to attract the largest number of listeners, it fell to the lot of the broadcasting companies to provide all of those innumerable services no sponsors could be found to underwrite and also to satisfy the demands for both time and representation on the air of the various groups which constitute both listening audience and the public at large. In meeting these demands, the broadcasters again found themselves at the point of conflict between the interests of the listening audience, which would not be bored, and special sections of the public which felt that the importance of their particular interests warranted access to the air.

*Pressure Groups.* As the industry matured, therefore, broadcasters inevitably adopted an attitude of neutrality between conflicting interests, and out of this neutrality grew the adoption of policies which would ensure a fair use of the medium; for only by such use could the companies protect their basic asset, the approval of the audience.

The economic policies of American broadcasting companies, then, are the direct product of the forces inherent in the system, or of five principal determinants: economic self-interest, the radio audience, pressure groups, advertising sponsorship, and government regulation. Acting one on the other, these influences tend to produce interesting combinations. For ex-

ample, pressure groups may act directly on the government to institute changes inimical to the wishes of the majority of listeners and to the interests of the broadcaster. The audience and advertiser—as in the case of children's programs—may unite to thwart the combined efforts of a pressure group (represented in this case by parents, teachers, and child psychologists) to provide programs better suited for but distasteful to the audience (in this case represented by the children) and hence of dubious value to the advertiser. Or one portion of the audience may come in conflict with another portion, as happened during the reigns of the crooner, the jazz band, and the blues singer.

## SUSTAINING PROGRAMS AND THE SALE OF TIME

Following the formation of the principal networks,<sup>1</sup> the development of editorial policy came about through a process of slow crystallization rather than as the outcome of a basic philosophy of the attitudes to be adopted by the operators of a commercial broadcasting system in a democracy. Dealing with a new and unknown medium, lacking any experience to guide them, the broadcasters' first tendency was to draw upon the experiences of the publishing and theatrical worlds. It was quickly discovered, however, that, while plausible analogies existed, broadcasting involved innumerable problems never encountered by either publisher or theater manager. The broadcaster, for example, could not exclude a portion of his audience as the theatrical producer could exclude children under a given age. Nor could the broadcaster, as did the newspaper or magazine publisher, build up a marketable circulation by appealing to a single segment of his audience.

In the operation of sustaining activities, however, certain needs soon became apparent. If the broadcasting company, operating on a nationwide scale, was to preserve and increase audience good-will, it must, in addition to providing acceptable entertainment, evolve practices which would at the same time win the approval of the majority of listeners and would forestall,

<sup>1</sup> One should point out that any discussion of the editorial policies of broadcasting companies is of necessity confined almost entirely to a consideration of those prevailing on the major networks since it is a physical impossibility for any single individual to have anything but a most superficial knowledge of the policies adopted by the hundreds of independently owned stations in the United States. Through their owned, leased, operated and associated stations, however, the principal network operators determine the policies followed by more than one-third of the broadcasting stations in the country. Similar policies are generally observed on local stations not associated with any major network. The policies in force on the remaining third of the outlets vary from station to station and are determined by the individual owner or operator.

so far as possible, the criticisms of particular groups within the audience. To meet these conditions, the first broad general policies came into being. Fundamental to all others were the policies governing the sale of time, for very early the more farsighted broadcasters saw that they could not permit their facilities to be bought for the purpose of influencing public opinion without promptly offending some portion of their audience. It became a basic policy of both major networks, therefore, to refuse to sell time to groups or individuals or to commercial interests for the discussion of controversial public issues, for special pleading (other than the special pleading of the advertiser who hopes to induce listeners to buy his product or his service) or for the presentation of partisan points of view.

Having adopted the policy of refusing to others the purchase of time for such purposes, the larger broadcasting companies included themselves in such policies. In other words, neither of the major companies has ever used its facilities to support its own point of view in controversies. When a controversial situation arises, they confine themselves to the same channels for reaching the public as those to which their opponents are limited—that is, the press, the public platform, and the printed pamphlet. As a corollary to the restrictions governing the sale of time, the policy of supplying time free of charge for the discussion of questions of public interest was adopted. This policy was shortly extended to embrace educational and religious broadcasting for which neither large network now sells time.

In allotting free sustaining time, it might be pointed out that the same general considerations prevail as those which weigh in the decisions of a news editor—news value, topical interest, the numerical importance of the groups to be represented, and like considerations. Except in the case of grave public or national emergencies—a flood, a Lindbergh kidnaping, a serious disaster—time allotments for sustaining programs are necessarily influenced by commercial commitments and by the showman's desire to maintain a satisfactory balance between the various types of programs on the air. Variety is considered essential to successful broadcasting operation: music must be interspersed with drama, and comedy with serious discourse. Guided by this desire for variety, many decisions are made which seem to involve the editorial function of inclusion or exclusion of material but which are dictated solely by considerations of audience appeal.

The one exception to the rule of refusing to sell time for the discussion of public issues is made during the period between the close of the national political conventions and the elections in November. For the weeks of intensive campaigning, time is sold to political parties, groups, and candidates

without discrimination between parties. While the giving or selling of time to political speakers is a matter for the broadcasting company to decide for itself, the company is required by law to afford all candidates identical opportunities in the use of its facilities. The law on the subject is embodied in Section 315 of the Federal Communications Act of 1934, and reads as follows:

If any licensee shall permit any person who is a legally qualified candidate for any public office to use a broadcasting station, he shall afford equal opportunities to all other such candidates for that office in the use of such broadcasting station, and the Commission shall make rules and regulations to carry this provision into effect: *Provided*, that such licensee shall have no power of censorship over the material broadcast under the provisions of this section. No obligation is hereby imposed upon any licensee to allow the use of its station by any such candidate.

While the law applies only to "legally qualified candidates," one broadcasting company has adopted very definite policies covering all aspects of political broadcasting. The nature of these policies is clearly set forth in the published correspondence between the Republican National Committee and the Columbia Broadcasting System during December 1935 and January 1936. In this correspondence, Mr. William S. Paley, the president of the broadcasting company, refused the Committee's request, (1) to be allowed to purchase time prior to the national convention, and (2) to be permitted to broadcast dramatizations of political issues. In explanation of his refusal of these requests, Mr. Paley made the following statements on policy:

It is our fixed policy not to sell time for propaganda of any sort. When we think the public is sufficiently interested in a subject suitable for discussion over the air so that propagandists of opposing sides should be heard, we allot time without charge.

Defining propaganda, the statement said:

What I mean [by propaganda], in a general way, is this: We would not, for example, sell time to the public utilities holding companies to agitate against proposed legislation restricting or regulating their operations. We would and did give them time in which to argue against the proposed legislation just as we gave the advocates time to argue in favor of such legislation.

On the other hand if the public utilities wanted to buy time to advertise their goods and services—that is, to promote the use of gas and electricity—we would unhesitatingly sell them available time for such use. To illustrate a little further, we sell time to commercial sponsors for the promotion of the sale of their goods and services or the creation of institutional good-will, but we do not allow them to use such bought time to agitate for high or low tariffs, changes in the national or city or state tax structure, or other things of that nature.

The following explanation accompanied the refusal of the request to permit the dramatization of political issues:



Our reasons for not allowing dramatizations (*of political issues*) are as follows: Appeals to the electorate should be intellectual and not based on emotion, passion or prejudice. We recognize that even the editorial discussion of campaign issues can to a degree be stamped with the aforementioned flaws, but we are convinced that dramatizations would throw the radio campaign almost wholly over to the emotional side. . . . While we realize that no approach to the electorate is ideal, we believe that American voters have been trained to discriminate between the assertions of orators, whereas we do not believe they could discriminate fairly among dramatizations, so that the turn of national issues might well depend on the skill of warring dramatists rather than on the merits of the issue.

While the policies governing the sale of time for political purposes are common to both major broadcasting companies (although the Columbia System has made more detailed and specific public statements concerning its policies than has NBC), all other companies, networks, or stations do not observe the same scruples. Outside of the nationwide networks, time may be bought for propaganda purposes and for the dramatization of controversial issues, political and otherwise.<sup>2</sup> It is, therefore, a fact that the two great operating companies by no means control or influence even a majority of outlets in the country.

### **POLICIES GOVERNING COMMERCIAL PROGRAMS**

While the foregoing section dealt with the evolution of the broad general policies which govern sustaining operations, it should be noted that until comparatively recently neither of the broadcasting companies chose to inform the public of their policies as these were evolved and adopted. The reasons are apparent. Sensitive to any gust of unfavorable public opinion that might arise, the broadcasting companies felt that the fewer specific statements on policy they made to the public the fewer were the chances of becoming involved in public controversy. As a result the few statements issued to the public were general in character and expressed good intentions rather than

<sup>2</sup> The common practice is to have material which is unacceptable to CBS or NBC placed on records "by electrical transcription," and for the records to be sent to the small (which means lower-priced) local stations throughout the country. Recorded broadcasts command the prevailing commercial rates, and are accepted or not at the discretion of the station owner or operator. The transcription method of reaching the radio audience has been used consistently by pressure groups and by special interests, and by both the Democratic and Republican National Committees during the recent Presidential campaign. The broadcasting of material excluded by the larger companies is not necessarily restricted to recordings, of course, as the incident of Father Coughlin illustrates. Unable to purchase time from CBS and NBC, because of the ruling against selling time for religious or educational broadcasts, the radio priest was successful in buying time from independent stations and in hooking these together to create a network of his own. A network, of course, is brought into being through the use of telephone facilities. Since the telephone companies are common carriers, they have no jurisdiction over the material carried along their wires.

explicit details. This was particularly the case in connection with the slowly emerging policies—beyond those dealing with slander, libel, obscenity, profanity, and so forth—governing commercial programs.

As was pointed out earlier, the logic of the situation should have furnished an identity of interests between broadcaster and sponsor. Such failing to prove the case, public criticism as to both the character and quantity of commercial continuity rose to a serious pitch by the beginning of 1935, particularly in connection with commercially sponsored children's programs and with those lauding the virtues of patent medicines. To meet this criticism the Columbia Broadcasting System broke with the cautious tactic that had prevailed theretofore when it publicly announced the adoption of new policies (*New Policies: A Statement to the Public, Advertisers and Advertising Agencies*: The Columbia Broadcasting System, New York, May 15, 1935) which provided regulations to govern children's programs, and to control the quantity and nature of advertising matter which might in future be broadcast from its stations. This announcement marked a turning point in American broadcasting procedure. In adopting these regulations this company assumed a larger measure of editorial responsibility and accountability than had been publicly acknowledged by any broadcasting company theretofore, and since that time the same company, on numerous occasions, has led the industry in embracing opportunities to state its conception of the duties and responsibilities of private ownership of the country's broadcasting facilities.

In relation to children's programs, the company made the following statement:

The Columbia Broadcasting System has no thought of setting itself up as an arbiter of what is proper for children to hear; but it does have an editorial responsibility to the community, in the interpretation of public wish and sentiment, which cannot be waived. In accordance with this responsibility we list some specific themes which are not to be permitted in broadcasts for children:

The exalting, as modern heroes, of gangsters, criminals, and racketeers will not be allowed. Disrespect for either parental or other proper authority must not be glorified or encouraged. Cruelty, greed, and selfishness must not be presented as worthy motivations. Programs that arouse harmful reactions in the child must not be presented.

Conceit, smugness, or an unwarranted sense of superiority over others less fortunate may not be presented as laudable. Recklessness and abandon must not be falsely identified with a healthy spirit of adventure. Unfair exploitation of others for personal gain must not be made praiseworthy. Dishonesty and deceit are not to be made appealing or attractive to the child.

At the same time, the company stated that it would no longer permit the broadcasting of any product which described "graphically or repellantly

any internal bodily functions, symptomatic results of internal disturbances, or matters not generally considered acceptable topics in social groups." The policy specifically excluded not only all "advertising of laxatives as such but the advertising of any laxative properties in any other product." It further excluded "the discussion of depilatories, deodorants, and other broadcasting which, by its nature, presents questions of good taste in connection with radio listening."

The new policies adopted also limited the amount of direct advertising matter permitted to 10 per cent of the total time during the evening hours and 15 per cent during the daytime, with an additional forty seconds allowed for fifteen-minute programs.

While the broadcasting company in many cases actually creates and produces the program of a commercial sponsor—writing the script, selecting the music, engaging the actors and musicians, rehearsing the whole, and delivering the completed performance to the open microphone—the more usual practice is for the sponsor, through his advertising agency, to provide his own program. In such cases, which are greatly in the majority, the broadcasting company has nothing to do with the preparation of the program but only rents the use of its studio facilities and technical equipment for the necessary rehearsal time, and the use of its leased wires and transmitter for a limited period, usually fifteen minutes or some multiple thereof.

*Departmental Supervision.* Nevertheless, the broadcasting companies maintain rigorous editorial supervision of all commercial programs. Each of the large broadcasting companies is now highly departmentalized and has executives in charge of departments devoted to talks, education, children's programs, women's affairs, current events, to name but a few. The executives heading these departments ordinarily exercise the editorial function of selection. In certain instances, their decisions are guided by or reviewed by company officers. Where policies have been long established, the department head usually makes his own decisions; where new questions arise, as they continually do in broadcasting, they are decided by the heads of the organization.

Each company maintains an editorial or continuity acceptance department whose function is to pass on written matter before it goes on the air. All commercial or advertising continuity passes through these departments together with a considerable portion of sustaining continuity. Both commercial and sustaining continuities are examined first to determine that they are neither slanderous nor libelous; that they contain no indecent, obscene or profane language; that they may be delivered within the rigid time-

bracket allotted, and that they conform to the standards of good taste adopted by the company over whose transmitters they will reach the listening public. Whenever any proscribed matter is discovered it is edited as a matter of self-protection since the broadcasting company is liable, as publisher, for any damages suffered as a result of statements made over its facilities.

The exceptions to the foregoing procedure are numerous. For example, there are many cases in which talks must be made extemporaneously into the microphone as in the case of sports broadcasts, eye-witness reports and, under unusual circumstances, some commentators, whether these be sponsored or unsponsored. The same sometimes holds true for forum or debate programs. In such cases the only protection the broadcasting company has is to rely on the responsibility of the individual, and, if the worst comes to the worst, to cease transmitting during the course of the broadcast, as happens on rare occasions.

*Censorship versus Editorial Discretion.* "Censorship does not exist in the sense of asking that the views of a speaker agree with those of any member of the company's editorial staff."<sup>3</sup> Speakers, however, are asked to observe the editorial taboos. Many of these are legal proscriptions and are clear and unequivocal. The only one concerning which there is any ambiguity is that dealing with "good taste." The broadcasting companies admit the impossibility of providing an exact definition for either good taste or propaganda. In both cases, the final decision must rest on editorial judgment.

The most noted instance in which the "good taste" ruling was applied was that of a guest speaker on a series of broadcasts made under the aegis of a medical association over the network of the Columbia system. In the original transcript of an address dealing with venereal disease as a social menace, there occurred a number of times the word "syphilis." The speaker was asked to phrase his speech differently and when this request was not acceded to was refused permission to go on the air.

Charged with exercising censorial powers, the company justified its position on these grounds:

That broadcasting is unique in that it reaches family and social groups, of both sexes and ages, simultaneously; is heard in restaurants and public gathering-places as well as homes; its material must offer something of interest to all these groups at various times, and must at no time whatever be offensive to any of them by any established standard whatsoever.

To a certain degree, of course, the question of offensiveness is somewhat subjective; that is, it may be a matter of personal taste and like and dislike; and in this minor degree the editor has to act arbitrarily, trusting to his own personal

<sup>3</sup> Address before the Institute of Public Affairs, University of Virginia, July 16, 1936, by Frederick A. Willis, Assistant to the President, Columbia Broadcasting System.

good taste as being representative of the larger whole. But in broad matters of wide community interest there is small question and much certainty. It is very evident, for instance, that attacks on religious faiths and creeds are offensive to many listeners in the radio audience; and such attacks, therefore, are not permitted by nationwide broadcasters. . . .

Such editorial control means merely that the radio executive is dutifully trying to reflect in his management the best established thought and opinion of his community. Unlike the editors of most newspapers and magazines, he has no "editorial policy" which seeks to promote some particular school of philosophy or economics or morals, either by emphasis or formal argument. . . . In all matters of controversy he tries to present equally and fairly both points of view. He seeks to make broadcasting a great community voice.

The above quotation, from a speech delivered by an official of the Columbia Broadcasting System before a Regional Conference on Social Hygiene held in New York City, states the position in regard to matters of taste and the standards used by one broadcasting company to determine what is to be judged as bad taste and what as good.

In education the policies of both companies are practically the same: that is, to refrain from competition with the classroom, leaving formal teaching to the traditional agencies, and concentrating rather on supplementary programs such as NBC's Music Appreciation Hour with Walter Damrosch and CBS's American School of the Air. In religious broadcasting the companies rely on the judgment of advisers representing all the principal faiths of the country. Time is not sold but is allocated free of charge to the various faiths in proportion to their numerical strength. To a greater extent than in any other field, speakers on religious topics are the nominees of various groups rather than the choice of the broadcasting companies.

Another field to which special interest attaches is that having to do with international affairs. While broadcasts involving international affairs or foreign speakers require more editorial care than possibly any other type, American broadcasting companies, because of private ownership, are able to adopt a policy impossible under any other broadcasting system in the world. They may bring listeners any foreign program they choose without the interference of or collaboration with any government department or agency in the United States.

*Editorial Standards Become More Definite.* Before any program, commercial or sustaining, is approved by either broadcasting company it must be submitted in manuscript form or, if the company so desires, a "live audition" must be given. To gain acceptance, the proposed program must conform to the standards of the individual broadcasting company. Programs which are refused by one company are sometimes accepted by another, but many



programs are turned down by both companies because of their dubious entertainment value, objectionable subject matter, lack of importance or amateurish treatment.

Once a program is accepted, each succeeding continuity must be submitted for editorial acceptance in advance. The *NBC Program Policies* (Published January 1934, and circulated to Advertisers and Advertising Agencies; revised March 1936) prohibit: 1) The use of the Deity's name except when used reverently or as part of a standard classic work. 2) Offensive statements or suggestions regarding religious views, racial traits and the like. 3) False or questionable statements and all forms of misrepresentation. 4) Obscene or off-color jokes or songs, oaths, sacrilegious expressions, and all other language of doubtful propriety. In addition to these negative requirements are the following: 5) Testimonials must reflect the genuine experience of a competent witness. Dramatized commercials, involving doctors, nurses or other professional persons, must be read by living members of these professions or labelled as fictitious. 6) Statements of prices and values must be confined to specific facts.

NBC places no arbitrary time limit on commercial announcements as does Columbia, preferring to deal with this problem as individual cases arise. It refuses, however, to accept objectionable patent medicine advertising and warns sponsors that "unpleasant or gruesome statements must be avoided as they may offend a large portion of the listening audience." Controversial matters are excluded from commercial programs; sponsors may not speak in a derogatory manner of competing products; flamboyant advertising claims are frowned upon. And always the advertiser is cautioned to remember that: "The homes which he thus enters are of all types. The broadcast audience includes the farm family, the small-town family, the city family; it comprises practically all members of the family, sometimes singly, sometimes as a group. It embraces persons of all beliefs and creeds . . . these characteristics . . . [and] the intimate personal nature of broadcasting and the wide range and joint listening of its audience primarily determine what properly may be put on the air."

It is evident from the rules and regulations imposed by nationwide networks on the advertising sponsor that this phase of broadcasting has already settled down to a regularized routine. To imagine that this system works automatically, however, is in error. The conflict, noted earlier in this article, still continues between the broadcasting company and that minority of sponsors who refuse to be guided by the realities of American broadcasting, who are indifferent to the fact that the whole intricate organization is

dependent for its survival on the continuance of satisfied public opinion. From this conflict come those incidents where practised policy seems at variance with stated policy. To anyone acquainted with the numerical quantity of editorial decisions required in the course of the broadcasting week, the exceptions to stated policy are rare and are more often the result of a failure on the part of editorial personnel than of compromise with principle.

# INFORMATIONAL TECHNIQUES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

By T. SWANN HARDING

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The customary manner of writing about the so-called publicity activities or public-relations problems of Federal government departments is simple. It consists, first, in acquiring a prejudice and the belief that they are all conceived in sin and born in iniquity; second, in ignoring the vast differences between the information methods of the various departments; and third, in selecting with relative disregard for accuracy what appear to be apt examples to illustrate the thesis that government departments should carry on no informational work at all. The result is a paper showing that government press, radio, and publication activities are a snare and a delusion, not to say a waste of public funds.

The present writer in preparing this review has a different objective and perhaps a different outfit of prejudices. He seeks, first, to state as impartially as possible what the Office of Information of the Department of Agriculture sincerely believes it is trying to do. He endeavors to give, secondly, a factual statement regarding the organization of the Office of Information and of the volume and cost of the work carried on. He presents, finally, a critical evaluation of the merits and defects of the methods used, and shows, largely from the printed annual reports of the Director of the Office of Information, that continual efforts are being made both to overcome defects and to modernize the informational work in accordance with current needs. This article, then, is a worm's-eye view of the place, prepared by one of the worms in person.

## OBJECTIVES: INFORMATION, NOT BALLYHOO

The annual report of the Director of Information of the Department of Agriculture, dated September 19, 1936, begins with the following words:

Information work in the Department reflects all its activities, both in research and service, and in the application of old and new principles and policies to farm and other national problems. It is efficient in proportion to the effectiveness with which it carries to the farmers, and to other interested groups, a correctly balanced, readily comprehensible, and adequate body of usable knowledge. Needless to say, this ideal of balance, quantity, and utility can only be approximated. New problems sometimes get more than their due share of attention. Sometimes the available facilities do not suffice to carry and properly distribute all the information that agriculture and industry require. Sometimes the complexity of the subject matter baffles the skill of the interpreter and the facts therefore fail to reach their goal in the public consciousness. It may fairly be claimed, however, that the Department's informational work meets these complex requirements more adequately today than ever before, and provides means for putting agricultural science into practice along an ever-widening front.

This paragraph is pregnant with meaning, especially for those who may regard the informational work of a Federal government department as necessarily publicity or propaganda, using the words in their more invidious connotations, that is, as practically synonymous with ballyhoo. The organic Act founding the Department of Agriculture bade it not only discover and collate agricultural knowledge, in the broadest possible sense, but also disseminate that information. As Secretary of Agriculture J. M. Rusk wrote in 1889: "The very essence of the duties devolving on this Department of Agriculture is that its results shall promptly be made available to the public by a comprehensive scheme of publication."

First, foremost, and all the time the information given out by the Department must be authoritative. Both the Department and its Office of Information, of course, have a frame of reference provided by an imperfect political government and a very fallible economic system. For that reason, alone, their work will be imperfect, at times even illogical. It would take the broadest kind of planning on an entirely new basis to make a thoroughly logical and scientifically planned informational program operate at 100 per cent efficiency, and then, queer beings that we are, we should probably be dissatisfied with it.

But somewhere there must be a final authority on scientific questions in the field of agriculture; somewhere the stream of basic knowledge must be kept pure and undefiled; somewhere there must be plant pathologists, animal specialists, agronomists, and horticulturalists who know what they

are talking about when they make public statements. The Department must, in its information service, be exact, objective, critical, and detached, even if this seems to make it slow and ponderous as well. It must not make too much haste. It cannot afford to be in error. Its reputation for authority entails heavy responsibility.

Next in importance after accuracy is the necessity for putting facts in the most comprehensible and usable form, and for placing those facts in the hands of those who can make use of them. Every mechanical agency must be called upon to accomplish this—the press, the mimeograph and multi-graph machines, the motion picture, the radio. The information must not be emitted in isolated, uncorrelated stabs of fact. It should be related to a general subject. The present trend is to organize the information on a commodity basis.

## PUBLIC VS. PRIVATE OBJECTIVE

A commercial publicity agency has a very different duty to perform. A private advertising or propaganda campaign may spend a great deal merely in attracting attention, bringing specific needs to the minds of the public, or even in inventing needs and then offering to fill them. It is not at all unusual for a private concern to spend a million dollars annually in radio advertising for a single product. But the *entire* informational work of the Department of Agriculture must be financed at about the same cost. Again, though publicity costs in industrial production are usually rated at 5 per cent of the budget, the entire cost of printing all forms, all publications, bulletins, and mimeographs, of buying all machines needed, of distributing this material, and of paying the salaries of editors, writers, and others, amounts to less than 1 per cent of the annual budget of the Department of Agriculture.

It is true that in such work as forest-fire prevention the Department has to adopt the attention-attracting technique; the same is true in preventing soil-erosion. But in general the Department is engaged merely in the conveyance of facts to an already interested public. That this public is already interested is indicated by the fact that Department publications are today distributed on a request basis to the extent of 95 per cent. The annual report of the Director of Information for 1929 says:

But the Office of Information is in no wise a publicity agency in the usual sense of that term. Its purpose is not to acquire prestige for itself or for the Department as a whole, not to "sell" the Department to the public or to advertise the achievements of Department workers, but to make public the results of the Department's manifold activities.



Naturally there is always present the human tendency to break over into an effort to attract attention, but the counter tendency to curb this is also present. These two forces are in chronic conflict, their balance depending on economic and other conditions. But when so great a program must be financed on so little, constant care must be exercised to make the money go far. This is a tremendous job. The Department is required to do more than issue bald announcements of the results of its research in press releases; it must interpret these new developments in their natural scientific context and show their practical utility.

Many of the jobs incidental to this program are stupendous, such, for instance, as the preparation of comprehensive indexes to the Department's publications over long periods of years. This is done in the Division of Publications of the Office of Information, its other two Divisions being Press and Radio. Again, the report for 1936 mentions a dozen or more new publications on land use and soil conservation, and the issuance of the *Atlas of American Agriculture*, showing the frost and growing seasons, precipitation and humidity, natural vegetation, temperature data, wind and sunshine data, and soils for all sections of the country.

The same year the agricultural yearbook was changed fundamentally. The *Yearbook of Agriculture* for 1936 was devoted to voluminous fundamental information on plant and animal improvement by genetic means, much of the material being based on a survey by a special genetics committee to locate superior plant and animal strains. The inclusion of some 500 pages of statistics in the yearbook was discontinued and these appear in a new publication called *Agricultural Statistics*. At the request of the Joint Committee on Printing, two popular books by the Bureau of Animal Industry's scientists—*Special Report on Diseases of Cattle* and *Special Report on Diseases of the Horse*—were revised. These are elaborate illustrated textbooks.

## AGENCIES OF INFORMATION

We turn now from the attitude of the Office of Information toward what may be called its "public-relations" problem, to discuss the methods it uses to solve the problem. First we should consider briefly the organization of this work in the Department of Agriculture.

The Office of Information supervises the expenditure of all Departmental appropriations for printing and binding. It conducts all business the Depart-

ment transacts with the Government Printing Office. It has general supervision of all editing, printing, indexing, illustrating, binding, and distribution of publications, and the maintenance of mailing lists. It maintains also an addressing, duplicating, and mailing section to serve the various Bureaus of the Department.

This Office likewise secures the circulation in popular form of the discoveries and recommendations of scientists, specialists, and field workers of the Department. It provides the public with agricultural facts by means of its Press Service. These facts come from bulletins issued by its Division of Publications or are given orally by the scientists most concerned.

The Press Service keeps closely in touch with correspondents and free-lance writers, furnishing them with suggestions, material, and illustrations for articles. Through its Radio Service the Office broadcasts agricultural facts from many stations in the United States daily. It gives authentic information of practical use to farmers and others concerning discoveries made by the Department scientists and the farm practices they recommend. Questions in the fields of agriculture, home economics, and consumption economics are answered by radio.

The Extension Service of the Department of Agriculture also makes available the results of research in agriculture and home economics. This it does by coordinating the extension activities of the Department Bureaus with those of the State agricultural colleges and experiment stations. It gives emergency assistance to farmers in acute situations. It represents the Department in the cooperative extension work on agriculture and home economics by the State colleges and the Department under the Smith-Lever, Capper-Ketcham, and supplementary Acts of Congress.

Each of the forty-eight States, as well as the Territories of Hawaii, Alaska, and Puerto Rico, has a director of extension who acts as joint representative of the Department and of the State agricultural college. There are also county agricultural agents, county home demonstration agents, and county club agents, usually with offices in the county seat.

The distinguishing feature of this work is teaching by field demonstration. Other educational methods are invoked as needed to teach the best farm and home practices to rural men and women, boys and girls. The Extension Service also has charge of the preparation, installation, and display of agricultural exhibits at State, interstate, and international fairs, and of the motion picture activities of the Department.

## MAGNITUDE OF THE TASK

The magnitude of the work carried on by the Office of Information is suggested by the lines which began the annual report for 1930:

By distributing approximately 25,000,000 popular and technical publications and over 10,000,000 lists of farmers' bulletins and leaflets, by giving to the press of the country more than 3,000 news and interpretative articles, by furnishing speakers or manuscripts daily to over 300 radio stations in all parts of the country, by cooperating with special writers, correspondents, and others, by having representatives make personal addresses, by answering several million letters, supplying lecturers to colleges and universities, and reaching farmers direct through the Extension Service, the Department of Agriculture made its information available to the public during the year 1930. Other calls for information were cared for by the issuance of over 58,000,000 pages of mimeographed, multigraphed, or rotaprinted material by the Bureau of the Department.

The report for 1935 announced the following activities of the Division of Publications: 220,113 photographic jobs completed with drafting work on 2,506; 3,876 printing requisitions drawn for various types of printing for the Department proper, and 2,171 for the Agricultural Adjustment Administration; \$2,726.10 received in 17,654 letters requesting publications; 6,522 visitors given 35,315 copies of publications; 510,950 letters handled in the Distribution Section alone; 197,383 copies of publications sent abroad; 111,167,608 pages of duplicating work done. Approximately 2,450 press releases were sent out this same year. The National Farm and Home Hour was being broadcast by fifty-six stations, and the Western Farm and Home Hour went out over ten stations.

The report for 1936 records that 22,375,132 copies of publications were distributed during the fiscal year covered; 1,466 manuscripts of a scientific, technical, and popular nature were submitted for publication; the output of photographic items numbered 243,976; 79,719,532 pages of mimeographed, 26,642,450 of multigraphed, and 19,054,896 of multilithed material were issued. The output of mimeographed press releases for this year, the last for which records exist to date, was 1,316, not including 716 items distributed for the Agricultural Adjustment Administration, and 30 special statements not mimeographed. The Weekly Clip Sheet was coming into wider usage and increasing editorial recognition was accorded it.

The National Broadcasting Company and fifty-three associated stations were transmitting the Department radio programs. Arrangements for correlating information broadcasts by the State extension services and the Department were in effect in thirty-eight States. In these, and in ten other States in which the Department releases were sent directly to cooperating

stations, a total of 280 stations were broadcasting information from the Department of Agriculture and affiliated agencies.

Adverse critics are prone to overlook the fact that this service is given in response to a demand. Very often 3,000 requests for data reach the Office of Information in a single day, and this does not include the hundreds of letters sent directly to the Bureaus of the Department and handled by their own information sections. The annual report of the Office of Information for 1932 carried a section under the subhead "Millions Request Facts from the Department" and it stated nothing less than the truth.

The availability of free publications is no longer mentioned by the Department either in radio or press releases. Yet a million requests for publications come in per month. The report for 1935 noted a further increase in subject-matter requests requiring special replies. Agricultural changes were taking place rapidly, and thousands of families wanted comprehensive, detailed, and perhaps unavailable information. Letters began to come requesting special compilations of statistics, explanations of the economic bases of programs undertaken, advice about locating a particular type of farm in a particular locality, or regarding procedure in obtaining loans, producing poultry or vegetable crops, or supplementing cash income by home production of fruits or vegetables. Such letters merit careful replies and are, of course, far more expensive per unit than bulletins.

### ARE PUBLIC FUNDS WASTED?

This brings us again to questions of costs. Popular circulars, leaflets, or bulletins that can be published at about 1¼ cents a copy usually form cheaper and more comprehensive replies to the ordinary run of queries than do personal letters which may cost from 25 cents to \$1 each, depending on the time and attention from specialists and others it takes to prepare them. Yet, though publications were known to be available free, in 1932, more than 1,000,000 copies were sold for \$75,000 by the Superintendent of Documents—and no easy method of making payment exists to facilitate such small-change transactions either.

A few years ago, when adverse criticism of Department of Agricultural publications was at its height, many fantastic charges were made. It may be useful to examine a few of these. The most famous charge concerned the Department's solicitude in publishing a bulletin on the love-life of the bullfrog. A Senator cited this "bulletin" among twenty-four publications of the Department which he considered worthless. Of the twenty-four only

seven were actually publications of the Department of Agriculture and only three of the others were publications of any federal government Department. The remainder were articles in various technical and semi-popular journals published privately and at private expense.

However, the bullfrog-bulletin charge was rife from 1931 to 1933. What was its actual basis in fact? This was easily ascertained, though none of the critics took the trouble. In 1921, a decade earlier, there had been printed the usual annual report of the Bureau of Fisheries in the Department of Commerce entitled the "Report of the United States Commissioner of Fisheries for the Fiscal Year 1919." Appendix VI of this report was a reprint of a 44-page article entitled "Frogs: Their Natural History and Utilization." It was by Professor A. H. Wright of Cornell and was a professional paper included among others in the report because of its scientific interest and commercial importance. The Department of Agriculture was in no way implicated and it had not published any bulletin on frogs at all.

Another charge frequently made concerned the issuance of a "worthless" bulletin on onions. It actually was *Farmers' Bulletin No. 354-F* on "Onion Culture," and was said to have appeared May 1, 1930. It was originally printed because it was far cheaper to do that than continually to write personal letters to the many requesting information on the subject. The bulletin was extremely popular but the critic was wrong. It first appeared in 1909. It had to be reprinted continually as more than a million and a half copies were needed. They were sent out solely on request and the 30,367 copies that appeared in April 1930 were only the latest reprinting of a bulletin in constant demand.

Records have been kept on the cost of producing farmers' bulletins for more than seventy years, and the average is less than 1½ cents a copy for printing and distribution. This is true in spite of the fact that adverse critics repeatedly declared and still declare that the Government has no idea what it costs to print its bulletins.

One more example seems relevant. It concerns a leaflet on bird life criticized adversely and in the most sarcastic terms as useless and nonsensical and a scandalous waste of taxpayers' money. What were the facts? The leaflet contained four pages. The Department of Agriculture had 20,000 copies issued incidental to its legal responsibility for the preservation of various useful birds. This cost about \$95 or ½ cent each, the costs being known to a penny. Of these 20,000 copies, 19,700 were distributed free on request. But 10,000 additional copies were ordered in bulk by a business



firm which paid \$33 for them. The Superintendent of Documents also had a supply, and of his he sold 11,548 copies at 5 cents each. Thus, when the figures are worked out, the Department of Agriculture got its 20,000 copies for free distribution for nothing, because its original investment of \$95.03 brought in \$110.40 and, at the time, the Superintendent of Documents still had \$18.50 worth of the leaflets in stock to sell!

The annual Report of 1936 shows that printing and binding expenditures for the fiscal year totaled \$800,000, of which \$265,266 was spent on administrative forms and binding; \$192,429 for reports, regulatory notices, periodicals, and other administrative publications; \$148,702 for technical publications; and \$363,282 for salaries. During this year the Superintendent of Documents took in a total of \$56,980.43 as sales receipts from Departmental publications.

Without any desire to express an opinion regarding the utility of advertising, it seems relevant to insert here, purely for purposes of comparison, a few 1935 figures (as given by *Printers' Ink*, January 16, 1936) on publicity expenses by well known private concerns. The reader may then decide for himself whether the Department of Agriculture uses its small printing appropriations wisely or not.

In 1935, the figures show, 224 companies spent more than \$100,000 each for advertising in 123 printed media, and the total was \$89,212,898. The companies in this group accounted for about 72 per cent of total advertising expenditures of this character. Seventeen corporations spent a million or more, for instance: Standard Brands, \$2,474,313; R. J. Reynolds Tobacco, \$2,357,196; Procter & Gamble, \$2,211,039; Lambert Pharmacal \$1,844,944; General Foods, \$1,750,782; Campbell's Soup, \$1,712,661. Cream of Wheat also spent \$410,994, Jell-O spent \$236,916, and Fleischmann's Yeast \$1,047,705.

At the same time 148 advertisers spent heavily on radio publicity; nine firms expending more than a million on this medium alone, the total for all being \$49,647,079. The following individual expenditures are perhaps of interest: Procter & Gamble, \$2,105,237; General Foods, \$1,948,509; Standard Brands, \$1,938,622; Colgate-Palmolive, \$1,679,037; Pepsodent, \$1,098,966; Kolynos, \$368,643; Bisodol, \$235,111; Anacin, \$202,876; Ex-Lax, \$128,982; Jell-O, \$373,091; Chase & Sanborn, \$659,505; Fleischmann's Yeast, \$262,894 (for bread) and \$522,984 (for health); Bayer Aspirin, \$498,287; Vick Chemical, \$333,854.

## DIFFICULTIES AND PROBLEMS

Are the present methods used by the Office of Information effective, and are defects remedied from time to time? As the report for 1929 queried: "(1) Is the knowledge in the Department made available to the public adequately? (2) Does it reach those for whom it is intended? (3) Is it used by those who receive it? (4) Can the present program be improved?"

Some defects in such informational programs are inherent in the programs themselves or in conditions over which the transmitting agency has no control. Thus the publication of scientific research papers is today in a rather chaotic state; too much is published and a great deal that appears is poor in quality. This condition can be remedied only by some general reorganization of the scientific publication program as a whole, the Department contributing a very small part of the total quantity.

There is perhaps less coordination between general publication (technical and semi-technical), press, and radio programs than there might be, but to coordinate them all immediately to meet marked changes in the requirements of the public is not always possible. Constant changes in trend and in method are indicated by the reports of the Office of Information, and continued effort is made to meet requirements as emergencies arise.

The public itself involves the publication program of any government department in some waste and inefficiency. For instance, the old system of distributing publications, and sending bulletins on raising horses to people who lived in small apartments, has been discontinued. It was replaced with a general check-list of publications sent out in response to requests, the titles of the publications always being as completely descriptive as possible. But many people will check every publication mentioned and send the list back expecting to receive all. In consequence some limitation has to be placed both upon the total number of publications and upon the number of each publication sent to any individual.

Another abuse creeps in from a most laudable motive. There is an increasing use of Department publications by teachers and school children. This cannot be prevented entirely because these citizens have as much right as any others to receive Department publications. It is unfortunate, perhaps, that there does not exist a group of publications specifically prepared for educational use.

The publication program is severely limited financially. The Office of Information reports for 1936 that it would take a million dollars to put in printed form the important research results now awaiting publication in the

Department. The situation in the Forest Service and the Bureau of Agricultural Economics is especially acute. The printing of blanks and forms needed in conducting regulatory work, crop-reporting, and the like increasingly eats up printing funds. Yet such routine printing must have priority.

Job-printing requirements of the Forest Service have increased six-fold in the last four years; those of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics have doubled. Hence much valuable data, badly needed in custodial, administrative, and regulatory work cannot be published. Increased use of outside publications only in part solves this problem, and even to that extent unsatisfactorily, for outside journals frequently refuse to publish the data in detail, nor can they supply the needs of libraries which carry files of Department publications. Carefully planned distribution of such outside publications is also impossible.

## NEW DEVELOPMENTS

New trends are repeatedly indicated in the reports. That for 1933 stated that, whereas the informational staff had been placing in the hands of those who applied for them the scientific, economic, regulatory and conservation facts developed, the new program called for emphasis upon economic and social adjustments, and upon planning activities designed to increase the buying power of farm commodities. The production-control phase of the agricultural program was now assuming importance. The voluntary cooperation of producers to accomplish certain definite ends must be solicited. Facts regarding supply and demand must be made available in a new way.

The report for 1934 said: "The Department of Agriculture's traditional function of diffusing 'useful knowledge on subjects connected with agriculture in the most general and comprehensive sense' took on new meaning and vitality during the fiscal year 1934." Fundamental changes were under way in farm-production practices, farm management, and cooperative action. Farmers were taking economic changes into account as never before. Letters were coming from those who must have accurate information quickly. The results of research must be more widely and promptly disseminated than ever before.

The report for 1936 shows this new trend unmistakably. A mere glance through it indicates that well-coordinated information has been widely circulated on soil and water conservation, on wild-life and forest protection, and on the newer economic phases of agriculture, while consumer information was in greater demand than ever before and was more definitely

emphasized in informational activities. Great effort has been made to coordinate press and radio programs to this end, and the latter modern educational agency has been used with marked effect in recommending and helping to set up the best type of organization for getting accurate information to the farm people who most need it. Meanwhile an innovation is the illustrated press release provided by the Press Service to give a quickly comprehensible picture. Significant maps and graphs, or simple linecuts of improved machinery, or of some modernized constructive method, are far superior to written descriptions alone.

During 1935-1936 a change was also made in handling home economics information for the press. The Press Service discontinued the use of a direct mailing list and began to cooperate with the Extension Service in delivering all home economics releases to State agricultural extension editors who, in turn, distributed the material directly to the press in their own States. This made it possible to supplement departmental with State information in this field, a wider dissemination of consumer information taking place without proportional increase in the working staff.

A fundamental change in the organization of information was announced in the reports of 1935 and 1936. This was the coordination of information under commodity headings, or under broad general classifications such as land-use, genetics, or soil conservation. Formerly the Office of Information tended to function along bureau lines and its research to fall in the mold of compartmented sciences like chemistry, bacteriology, and entomology. A single writer might be assigned to cover several bureaus. He could not possibly have specialized knowledge of all the work covered or keep in contact with all the activities of one bureau, much less coordinate them mentally with those of other bureaus, while at the same time keeping abreast of the information needs of 6,000,000 farm families.

The appointment of specialized writers to deal with each commodity will solve this problem to a great extent. It will enable one man, for instance, to specialize in all that relates to cotton—chemistry, physics, production, consumption, growing, processing, handling—and to gain such a background of knowledge as to make him, in a real sense, an authority. The Radio Service likewise is beginning to work along this line, and a wider application of the principle will be made in the future.

Again, the regionalization of information proceeds apace. Many popular bulletins have been regionalized, for information generally adapted to the farm families of definite agricultural regions is recognized as necessary today. Press releases may be limited to groups of States, or even to smaller

groups within a single State, by sending them to specialized or trade publications. Special radio broadcasts are devised to serve specific localities, the western network having recently been split into two sections on certain days to deal with specific problems of particular localities.

A similar and even more far-reaching development took place in the syndicated radio service. Farm Flash syndicate material was sent to thirty-five State extension services, there to be adapted to and supplemented with information for various sections in the States. Gradually a system is being developed which will tailor the radio information to fit the needs of the audience of a particular station. Though presented by a local authority on agricultural matters it grows out of Department of Agriculture as well as State research work.

The public responds to such efforts. For instance, a number of model discussion-group programs were presented by the Radio Service in connection with the Department's efforts to encourage public discussion of major agricultural problems. Not only were they favorably received, but more than a thousand listeners wrote to the Department asking for suggestions about establishing rural discussion groups.

Millions of farm families regularly participate in or are affected by current agricultural-adjustment, soil-conservation, resettlement, and land-planning programs. They often have occasion to help decide national policies and they can do so intelligently on a basis of what they hear and read. Increased interest in economic information grows rapidly—more people than ever before want the facts on carry-over supplies, export demands, foreign and domestic tariffs, foreign and domestic production, farm prices, and agricultural income.

For years the Department has been compiling basic information about agricultural resources and national problems. It has been making surveys of the various soils in different regions and classifying them; it has made inventories of forest resources, soil erosion, wild-life potentialities, population movements. Today, with emphasis upon planned land-use and conservation, it is often difficult to release such technical and semi-popular information rapidly enough to supply the demand. Significant informational activities in this connection include: completion of a Soils Section for the *Atlas of American Agriculture*; a series of broadcasts on findings and recommendations of the National Resources Committee; a series of press releases by States reporting the results of soil-erosion reconnaissance surveys; a series of press releases by States reporting the results of rural tax-delinquency surveys by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics; a comprehensive *Bibliography*



on *Land Settlement*; and a comprehensive report on *Economic and Social Problems and Conditions of the Southern Appalachians*.

A great deal more could be said, but this is sufficient to indicate that defects in the work of the Office of Information are recognized by its staff, and that efforts both to correct them and to follow the newest trends in public demand for information are made simultaneously. The informational program is economical and efficient. It is flexible. It is dynamic, not static; elastic, not hidebound. The annual reports of the Office of Information prove that constant, carefully planned efforts are made to meet emergencies and new situations as they arise, and to adapt the informational program to new needs and requirements. Errors are recognized; self-criticism is apparent; corrective action is taken continuously.

# SURVEYS

## TECHNICAL RESEARCH

HADLEY CANTRIL, Editor

This section is devoted to a survey of current research in the field of public opinion. Studies in the formation, analysis, and measurement of public opinion will be included. Material is to be drawn from a wide variety of fields such as economics, history, sociology, politics, social psychology, journalism, advertising, market research, and radio broadcasting.

### HOW ACCURATE WERE THE POLLS?

Straw polls are of theoretical importance in social science because they furnish a method of testing sampling techniques. A survey of opinion made to test certain hypotheses must rely upon sampling methods because of vast numbers involved in modern social studies. Straw polls may be said to fulfil the requirements of scientific prediction only to the extent that scientific methods of sampling are employed.<sup>1</sup>

While some of the Presidential election forecasters did much better than others in anticipating the events of November 3, 1936, in general they were baffled and surprised by the overwhelming character of the Democratic victory. The election showed that there is much yet to be learned about sampling techniques. None of the non-partisan state-by-state straw

<sup>1</sup>For a general discussion of election prediction see Claude Robinson, *Straw Polls* (New York, 1932). W. Y. Elliott in S. Rice (ed.) *Methods in Social Science* (Chicago, 1932), p. 88, takes the view that the *Literary Digest* polls have no particular scientific value because they simply amount to a pre-election contest.

polls came very close to the popular pluralities.

In the present analysis the relation of a number of variables to the election results will be considered. All of these variables were available before the election and could have been used as a basis of prediction. They are the 1932 Presidential returns, the 1934 Congressional election returns, the *Literary Digest* final unadjusted poll, the same poll corrected by Robinson's party-to-party-shift method, the final Crossley poll, and the final Gallup poll.<sup>2</sup> Table I gives the Democratic vote by states expressed as a percentage of the major party vote for each of the measures concerned.

The following methods will be employed to test the relation of the variables to the final election returns: approximation to the electoral vote distribution, percentage plurality error for the nation, average percentage state plurality error, product moment correlation, and regression equation. It is contended that the regression equation and the standard error of estimate give the best test of the accuracy of an election prediction.

Which of the variables concerned came the closest to the final division in the electoral college? In the order of the magnitude of electoral votes given to Roosevelt the variables stood: 488 by Congressional election returns of 1934, 477 by Gallup, 472

by 1932 Presidential election returns, 406 by the Crossley poll, 217 by the *Literary Digest* corrected poll, and 161 by the *Literary Digest* unad-

<sup>2</sup> The 1932 returns were taken from E. E. Robinson, *The Presidential Vote 1896-1932* (Stanford, 1934), the 1934 returns from *Congressional Directory* (senatorial returns were used in those states which elected senators in 1934 and the aggregate returns for representatives in the remaining states except in the Southern states indicated where 1932 returns were used because Democratic congressional candidates had no opposition), the October 31, 1936, issue of the *Literary Digest*, *Chicago Herald and Examiner*, November 1, 1936, for the Crossley poll, and *Lincoln Sunday Journal*, November 1, 1936, for the Gallup poll. The party-to-party-shift method is described in C. Robinson, *op. cit.*, p. 122 and in *New York Post*, October 17, 1936. In Indiana, for instance, the unadjusted *Digest* poll showed that Roosevelt would receive 73 per cent of his 1932 vote and 12 per cent of Hoover's 1932 vote. It was assumed the party shifts shown by the *Digest* were more accurate than the total figures. This meant that in Indiana for every 100 votes cast Roosevelt would receive 41 votes from his 1932 constituency and 5 votes from Hoover's for a total of 46 (see Table I). The formula may be expressed as follows:

Let *a* represent the percentage Democratic in 1932 according to the official returns

Let *b* represent the percentage Republican in 1932 according to the official returns

Let *c* represent the percentage of his 1932 vote that the *Digest* indicated Roosevelt would retain in 1936

Let *d* represent the percentage of the 1932 Republican vote that the *Digest* indicated Roosevelt would win in 1936

Then, the corrected *Digest* return by the party-to-party-shift method would be  $ca + db$ .

This method makes no allowance for the new voters in 1936, or rather, it assumes that these new voters will behave in the same fashion as those who said they voted in 1932.

TABLE I. *Per Cent Democratic of Major Party Vote According to 1936 Straw Polls and Recent Election Results*

State	ELECTION RETURNS			1936 STRAW POLLS			
	Roosevelt 1936 X <sub>a</sub>	Roosevelt 1932 X <sub>a</sub>	Congressional Vote 1934 X <sub>b</sub>	Crossley Poll 1936 X <sub>c</sub>	Gallup Poll 1936 X <sub>d</sub>	Literary Digest Unad- justed X <sub>e</sub>	Digest 1936 Ad- justed X <sub>f</sub>
Alabama	87	86	94	86	83	77	78
Arizona	72	69	74	63	58	46	53
Arkansas	82	87	92	84	81	74	78
California	68	61	58	62	59	46	54
Colorado	62	57	63	57	55	39	47
Connecticut	58	49	52	41	50	32	41
Delaware	56	49	46	48	53	41	48
Florida	77	75	75*	78	69	59	62
Georgia	88	92	92*	92	84	77	80
Idaho	65	61	60	55	61	42	50
Illinois	59	57	56	54	51	39	45
Indiana	57	56	52	55	52	38	46
Iowa	56	59	54	49	51	37	46
Kansas	54	55	49	48	48	36	44
Kentucky	59	60	55	58	60	55	55
Louisiana	89	93	93*	87	83	68	75
Maine	43	44	50	35	38	31	35
Maryland	63	63	57	59	60	51	53
Massachusetts	55	52	61	43	48	23	36
Michigan	59	54	48	52	51	33	42
Minnesota	66	62	60	55	54	40	50
Mississippi	97	96	96*	99	95	88	90
Missouri	61	64	60	59	57	43	51
Montana	73	62	60	65	61	44	53
Nebraska	58	64	56	53	53	39	48
Nevada	71	69	66	65	67	49	56
New Hampshire	51	49	50	45	44	23	35
New Jersey	60	51	59	51	51	32	40
New Mexico	64	64	55	59	60	51	54
New York	60	57	60	53	54	46	49
North Carolina	80	70	65	74	70	73	68
North Dakota	68	71	41	68	64	46	55
Ohio	61	51	60	49	52	40	44
Oklahoma	68	73	68	61	64	51	58
Oregon	68	61	48	62	61	48	56
Pennsylvania	58	47	52	45	51	40	42
Rhode Island	57	56	57	53	50	25	40
South Carolina	98	98	99	98	94	85	89
South Dakota	56	65	58	54	48	35	44
Tennessee	70	67	80	69	70	67	65
Texas	87	89	97	87	82	71	76
Utah	69	58	54	62	65	57	58
Vermont	43	42	49	38	39	25	33
Virginia	71	69	78	65	68	62	62
Washington	68	63	64	58	61	42	49
West Virginia	61	55	55	53	52	43	47
Wisconsin	68	67	52	62	57	38	47
Wyoming	61	58	59	50	52	38	45

\* Vote for Roosevelt in 1932 used.

justed poll. Never before did the polls show such a range of variation in the prediction of the electoral votes. James Farley, the chairman of the Democratic National Committee, in exactly anticipating the electoral vote of Roosevelt, showed himself to be the best predictor of them all. Was Farley's prophecy the result of the natural optimism of a party leader, good luck, or scientific sampling? On good authority, Michelson was quoted as saying three weeks before the election that Roosevelt was sure of 400 electoral votes. Perhaps the Democrats had not completed their canvass at this time or Emil Hurja was unduly cautious. It is not likely that Farley will now admit that he was surprised at his own abilities as a forecaster. Furthermore, the chances are that the final reports of the Democratic party workers were very revealing. The same cannot be said for the canvassing machinery of the Republican party if we can judge by a Republican poll reported just prior to the September elections in the State of

Maine. A comparison of the official figures with the Republican estimates shows that the Republican managers overestimated their strength by about 10 per cent.<sup>3</sup> This is what one would expect party managers to do.

As far as the popular vote in the nation was concerned, the best estimate was made by *Fortune* which used a very small sample—only 4,500 for the entire country.<sup>4</sup> It predicted that Roosevelt would receive 62 per cent of the total popular vote, 1 per cent over Roosevelt's actual percentage. Considering the fact that in a city such as Chicago only 75 people were interviewed, this forecast was a piece of good luck. The Democratic percentages of the total vote cast were as follows for the 1934 Congressional election returns, 57 per cent for the 1932 Presidential election returns, 54 per cent by the Gallup and Crossley polls, 49 per cent by the corrected *Digest* poll, and 41 per cent by the unadjusted *Digest* poll. Thus, it is clear that anyone

<sup>3</sup> National Republican Committee Poll for Maine, as reported in *Chicago Herald and Examiner*, August 30, 1936, compared with election results (President elected November 3, all others September):

	REPUBLICAN POLL	ELECTION RESULTS	ERROR
	<i>Per Cent Democratic</i>	<i>Per Cent Democratic</i>	<i>Per Cent Plurality</i>
Governor	30	43	26
Senator	38	49	22
Congressman, 1st District	31	42	22
Congressman, 2nd District	36	42	12
Congressman, 3rd District	23	39	32
President	20	43	26

<sup>4</sup> "The Fortune Quarterly Survey," *Fortune* XIV, October 1936; 130, 224.



TABLE II. *Percentage Plurality Errors—1936 Presidential Election*

<i>State</i>	<i>1932 Presi- dential</i>	<i>1934 Congres- sional</i>	<i>Crossley</i>	<i>Gallup</i>	<i>Literary Digest Unad- justed</i>	<i>Digest Adjusted</i>
Alabama	2	14	2	8	20	18
Arizona	6	4	18	28	52	38
Arkansas	10	20	4	2	16	8
California	14	20	12	18	44	28
Colorado	10	2	10	14	46	30
Connecticut	18	12	34	16	52	34
Delaware	14	20	16	6	30	16
Florida	4	4	2	16	36	30
Georgia	8	8	8	8	22	16
Idaho	8	10	20	8	46	30
Illinois	4	6	10	16	40	28
Indiana	2	10	4	10	38	22
Iowa	6	4	14	10	38	20
Kansas	2	10	12	12	36	20
Kentucky	2	8	2	2	8	8
Louisiana	8	8	4	12	42	30
Maine	2	14	16	10	24	16
Maryland	0	12	8	6	24	20
Massachusetts	6	12	24	14	64	38
Michigan	10	22	14	16	52	34
Minnesota	8	12	22	24	52	32
Mississippi	2	2	4	4	18	14
Missouri	6	2	4	8	36	20
Montana	22	26	16	24	58	40
Nebraska	12	4	10	10	38	20
Nevada	4	10	12	8	44	30
New Hampshire	4	2	12	14	56	32
New Jersey	18	2	18	18	56	40
New Mexico	0	18	10	8	26	20
New York	6	0	14	12	28	22
North Carolina	20	30	12	20	14	24
North Dakota	6	54	0	8	44	26
Ohio	20	2	24	18	42	34
Oklahoma	10	0	14	8	34	20
Oregon	14	40	12	14	40	24
Pennsylvania	22	12	26	14	36	32
Rhode Island	2	0	8	14	64	34
South Carolina	0	2	0	8	26	18
South Dakota	18	4	4	16	42	24
Tennessee	6	20	2	0	6	10
Texas	4	20	0	10	32	22
Utah	22	30	14	8	24	22
Vermont	2	12	10	8	36	20
Virginia	4	14	12	6	18	18
Washington	10	8	20	14	52	38
West Virginia	12	12	16	18	36	28
Wisconsin	2	32	12	22	60	42
Wyoming	6	4	22	18	46	32
<i>Average</i>	8.29	12.38	11.75	12.25	37.38	25.41

who assumed conditions had not changed much since the 1934 Congressional elections would have come just as close to the popular vote as *Fortune*. Simple extrapolation of the trend line fixed by the 1932 and 1934 Congressional elections would have given an almost perfect result. Usually the popularity of a party which has just won the presidency tends to fall off at the Congressional elections which follow the Presidential election. However, the Democrats managed more than to hold their own in the 1934 Congressional elections.

For the nation as a whole the 1934 Congressional elections anticipated the 1936 result, but when we consider the state-by-state results the 1934 returns are nowhere near as useful. Table II gives the percentage plurality errors state by state for each of the variables used. According to average percentage plurality errors these variables have the following rank: 8.29 for the Presidential returns of 1932, 11.8 for the Crossley poll, 12.2 for the Gallup poll, 12.4 for the Congressional returns of 1934, 25.4 for the corrected *Digest* poll, and 37.4 for the unadjusted *Digest* poll.

There is practically no difference between the average plurality errors of the Crossley and the Gallup polls. If the ten states of the Solid South are omitted, then the average plurality error for the Gallup poll is 13 and that of the Crossley poll 13.6. The

plurality errors of the Gallup poll are less in those states which were regarded as uncertain. Thus, in Connecticut, Delaware, Idaho, Iowa, Massachusetts, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Wyoming, Gallup came much nearer to the final returns than did Crossley. On the other hand, Crossley was better than Gallup in Illinois, Indiana, and South Dakota. If a person took these two polls together and resolved all doubts in favor of Roosevelt, he would come out correctly in the electoral college in all states except Kansas, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire. Or to put it in another fashion, if a person added 6 per cent to each state percentage the Gallup poll would have predicted the exact electoral result. Could any rational basis be found for making such a correction to the Gallup figures before the election? Some of the state polls conducted by metropolitan newspapers came much closer to the final result than did the Gallup. Thus, a person who assumed that the *New York Daily News* poll for New York, the *Baltimore Sun* poll for Maryland and the *Chicago Daily Times* poll for Illinois would come closer to the result than the Gallup poll for those states and could have assumed something like an average underestimation of the Roosevelt vote by Gallup of about 6 per cent.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> The *Baltimore Sun* poll gave Roosevelt 64 per cent of the total vote in Maryland,

Never before did the *Literary Digest* have such a large average percentage plurality error. In 1928 its average plurality error was 12 per cent and in 1932 only 6 per cent. It is true that the corrected figures shifted Arizona, California, Missouri, Montana, Nevada, North Dakota, and Oregon from the Landon to the Roosevelt column, but the corrected figures were still very wide of the mark. I believe that the *Digest* poll was honestly conducted even though the polling of Republican areas first was a little misleading. As in its previous polls, its sample was overloaded with persons in the higher income groups because the lists were made up largely from telephone books and automobile registers. It is likely that class lines were more sharply drawn in this than in preceding elections. The upper income groups supported Landon, whereas the labor groups, the have-nots, the underprivileged, those on relief, the farmers without telephones, and those without motor cars supported Roosevelt. Another interpretation which the *Digest* suggested was that the lower income groups were not interested in sending back the ballots which were mailed to them.<sup>6</sup> In Chicago every third registered voter was sent a ballot and the 100,000 that participated gave Landon a slight margin, although the final returns showed that Roosevelt carried the city 2 to 1. If

the editors of the *Digest* had wished to analyze their returns they could have adjusted their figures for Chicago by classifying the ballots by postal districts and giving the proper weight to each district. In fact, they could have marked ward and precinct numbers on the return ballots if they had wished.<sup>7</sup> Considering the time when the ballots were sent out, the *Digest* must have used the March registration lists and not the new October lists. Since there was an increase in registration it is likely that the *Digest* poll missed the new voters who evidently supported Roosevelt in larger numbers than Landon.

The coefficients of correlation and the regression equations listed below show that the Gallup poll was the best measure of all the variables concerned. If Gallup had hit the result exactly in each state, then  $r$  would have been 1, the constant in the regression equation would have been 0, and the regression line would have a slope of 1 since it would pass through the 45-degree angle. Gallup came the nearest to fulfilling these

the *New York Daily News* gave him 65 per cent in New York, and the *Chicago Daily Times* gave him 58 per cent in Illinois. According to these assumptions Gallup was underestimating Roosevelt's vote in these states respectively by 4, 11, and 7 per cent.

<sup>6</sup> See E. B. Roper, "Forecasting Election Returns," *Review of Reviews* XCIV (October 1936), 58.

<sup>7</sup> This would not destroy the secrecy of the straw poll and could have been done as the envelopes were addressed.

conditions. The high value of  $r$  meant that  $S_{ed}$  would have the lowest value of all. In other words, if the 1936 results by states are expressed as a function of the Gallup poll, the use of that function to predict the 1936 results comes closer than any of the other measures, since  $S_{ed}$ , the standard deviation of the residuals (difference between true value and estimated values), is the lowest standard error of estimate.<sup>8</sup>

Correlational methods show that the 1932 Roosevelt vote came closer to the final result than the Crossley poll. While  $r_{ge}$  is greater than  $r_{ga}$ , the constant and the regression coefficient for  $X_g$  on  $X_a$  come closer to the ideal conditions than those for  $X_g$  on  $X_e$ . Archibald M. Crossley, like Gallup, is an advertising research man. He said that he relied entirely upon a personal canvass to make his poll. No totals were mentioned in his releases. Because of the stand taken by Hearst in the campaign, everything was done before the election in his papers to soften the fact that Crossley was predicting Roosevelt's reelection. After the elec-

tion Crossley claimed that his poll was the best.<sup>9</sup>

The 1934 Congressional returns ( $X_b$ ) stand next to the bottom of this list because a Congressional election brings into play different influences than are found at work in a presidential election. Thus, there was a high Republican vote in North Dakota in 1934, but this was a Lemke vote which in 1936 shifted to Roosevelt.

What was the secret of the relative success of the Gallup poll? The word relative is deliberately used as Gallup himself expressed the hope before the election that he would come closer to predicting state pluralities than he did.<sup>10</sup> He claimed that in making his poll he strove to get a representative sample rather than a huge one. Part of his polling was done by means of a mail ballot, and the results which he obtained in this fashion followed very closely the *Digest* poll. These returns were supplemented by personal interviews in which an attempt was made to reach the lower income groups. By a system of weights for the different classes he arrived at the state percent-

* Variable	$r$	Regression Equation	S
1936 Gallup poll	.972	$X_g = 10.84 + .921X_a$	2.89
1932 Roosevelt vote	.939	$X_g = 11.78 + .851X_a$	4.24
1936 Crossley poll	.970	$X_g = 17.92 + .796X_e$	2.98
Literary Digest, Adjusted	.952	$X_g = 20.48 + .856X_e$	3.76
1934 Congressional vote	.862	$X_g = 21.99 + .700X_b$	6.24
Literary Digest, Unadjusted	.908	$X_g = 33.28 + .694X_e$	5.15

<sup>8</sup> *Chicago Herald and Examiner*, November 5, 1936.

<sup>10</sup> Gallup in an article entitled "Putting Public Opinion to Work" *Scribner's* (November 1936), p. 38, claimed that he would be able "to predict figures accurate within three points for all doubtful states and for all other states that have sizable populations."

ages reported in his releases. Each poll was separately reported, and it is not likely that any of his samples exceeded 300,000.<sup>11</sup> If in the present study I had used one of his earlier polls the results would not have been anywhere near so satisfactory. Gallup was just beginning to discover how to weight his samples more properly. Undoubtedly he can do a better job next time.

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*University of Chicago*

## SYMBOLS

A simple cross-out method has been successfully applied by *Dr. Ross Stagner (University of Akron)* to study the frequency and patterning of political and economic stereotypes. Stagner submitted to about 500 adults, chiefly factory and office workers and small business men, a list of forty words and phrases which served as symbols for various social stereotypes. Unpleasant words were to be crossed out.

Among those most disliked were: Ku Klux Klan, 90 per cent; Communist, 80 per cent; Child Labor, 74 per cent; Nazi and Fascist, 73 per cent. The Townsend Plan was crossed out by 48 per cent, the American Liberty League by 30 per cent, and Socialist—theoretically as unpleasant as Communist—by 43 per cent.

As would be expected, Stagner found patterns in the symbols crossed out, the most obvious pattern being

the tendency to cross out all "radical" terms. Words fitting this pattern are Revolution, I.W.W., Soviet, Pacifism, and Labor Union. There is also evidence for another pattern which groups together Republican, Democrat, Big Interests, Wall Street, Trusts, and American Liberty League. This pattern is not, however, as clear as the first.

It is obvious that most of these 500 sample Americans are prejudiced against the Fascist and Communist extremes and at the same time against Wall Street, Big Interests, and Child Labor. A "middle way" is implied in the correlation of .43 between the cross-outs on Nazi and Socialist and of .55 between Communist and Wall Street.

*Selden C. Menefee (University of Washington)* wanted to find out what effect political symbols and party labels had on political judgments.<sup>12</sup> That labels are important everybody knows. Menefee tried to measure the comparative force of different symbols. He wrote out sixteen statements, two of which represented a definite line of thought appropriately covered by a single word-symbol. The eight stereotypes studied were: Conservatism, Fascism, Patriotism, Pacifism, Liberalism, Radical-

<sup>11</sup> In his November 1, 1936, release Gallup said 312,551 ballots were distributed and in his November 8, 1936, release he said that 100,000 ballots were sufficient.

<sup>12</sup> *American Sociological Rev.*, August 1936, 614-21.



ism, Socialism, and Communism. First the statements were given to 742 people (mostly students, teachers, and professionals) who were asked simply to tell whether or not they agreed with the statement. Then about a month later the statements were given to the same people again, but this time the two statements that fit under a given symbol were preceded by that symbol (written in bold type) with a brief definition of what it meant. The subjects were asked to react both to the symbols and to the statements.

The percentages of positive responses to the symbols alone were:

Conservatism	33.0
Fascism	9.8
Patriotism	63.6
Pacifism	69.1
Liberalism	83.8
Radicalism	17.7
Socialism	47.0
Communism	8.9

When the statements were answered the second time, shifts of opinion were obtained. The direction and magnitude of the shift (in terms of percentage of shift possible) were as follows:

Conservatism	00.1
Fascism	—27.0
Patriotism	00.6
Pacifism	—7.8
Liberalism	18.9
Radicalism	—32.1
Socialism	8.6
Communism	—28.1

Fascism, Radicalism, and Communism are the scare-words; Liberalism the word with most positive valence.

## POLITICAL APPEALS

George Hartmann (*Teachers College, Columbia University*) combines his psychology with his electioneering. Although defeated in his district, he emerged with some experimental data concerning the comparative effectiveness of "rational" and "emotional" political leaflets in determining election results.<sup>13</sup> He divided the City of Allentown, Pa., into three classes of wards. In one class he distributed leaflets of a distinctly emotional variety urging support of the Socialist ticket; in another a "rational" appeal was distributed, while the third class of wards received neither variety. The same number of leaflets was distributed in each of the first two classes of wards and the leaflets were the same size, length, etc. Comparing the 1935 vote with that of 1934, he found an increase of 50 per cent in the Socialist vote in the first district (emotional appeal), an increase of 35 per cent in the second (rational appeal) and of 24 per cent in the third (control). Comparable figures for the Republicans in the same wards were 20 per cent, 24 per cent, and 16 per cent; for the Democrats 8 per cent, 15 per cent and 14 per

<sup>13</sup> *Jn. Abn. and Soc. Psych.*, 1936, 31, 99-114.

cent. (There was an increase of 17 per cent in total election participation.) This result is, of course, not news to the practical politician but it provides an interesting verification of his artistry.

## MEASURING ATTITUDES

*Dr. Douglas McGregor (Harvard)* has been experimenting with some simplified techniques for the measurement of attitudes. He points out that no matter how accurate an attitude scale may be, it does not, strictly speaking, measure attitudes at all. What it really measures is the extent to which individuals agree or disagree with certain statements of opinion. Hence any attempt to obtain completely accurate knowledge about attitudes by increasing the accuracy with which we measure opinions is somewhat absurd.

Suppose, he says, that we are trying to determine the probable frequency of automobile accidents along a certain new highway. Suppose, further, we know that fast drivers are more likely to have accidents than slow drivers. If we had no better method for determining the probable frequency of accidents, we could measure the average speed of cars passing over the highway. Our predictions on this basis would be somewhat inaccurate, but we should certainly not expect to improve their accuracy by increasing the accuracy of existing instruments for measur-

ing speed. In the same way, techniques which further improve the accuracy with which we can measure opinions do not necessarily improve the accuracy of our knowledge about behavior tendencies. Hence some simpler techniques for the measurement of attitudes might be just as accurate and much more useful.

The familiar Thurstone attitude scales are now generally held to be the most satisfactory. But their construction requires tremendous labor and considerable expense. A somewhat simpler device is Likert's technique where the degree to which an individual approves of a statement of opinion is an indicator of his attitude. Five *a priori* grades of approval or disapproval are listed for each opinion, the subject endorsing the category that best represents his own attitude. McGregor finds an uncorrected correlation of .80 between Thurstone's and Likert's scales concerning the attitude toward war.

But how can we ever know whether or not the distances between the five categories in Likert's scale are numerically equal? The remedy is simple. McGregor suggests that for the five categories we substitute a line, say 10 cm. long. One end of the line will indicate maximum approval; the other end maximum disapproval. All the subject has to do is to mark the line. This device yields an uncorrected correlation of .82

with the Thurstone scale and of .85 with the Likert scale.

An even more direct method is possible. McGregor simply states the issue of the test, for example, the problem of pacifism-militarism. The subjects indicated their opinions by marking a 10 cm. line one end of which is marked "extreme pacifism," the other "extreme militarism." Here there is an uncorrected correlation of .74 with the Thurstone scale and of .83 with the Likert scale. The new method furthermore yields a greater spread of opinions, indicating perhaps that the freedom from verbal symbols allows a more individualistic response.

While advocating the use of the "self-rating technique," McGregor also points out some of its limitations. If the issue is one concerning which the subject is apt to rationalize—such as sex or neurotic tendencies—self-rating is not likely to be accurate. But in many instances self-rating will prove just as useful and will have a healthy influence on the tester who will be less likely to forget the wholly approximate nature of his results.

## TESTING PROPAGANDA

A new technique for measuring the effect of propaganda has been devised by Dr. Richard L. Schanck (*Harvard University*).<sup>14</sup> Schanck believes that most attempts to test the effectiveness of propaganda have in-

troduced artificial situations, chiefly because the propaganda used has been obvious and revealed in the experiments. To overcome this handicap, he constructed various questionnaires, which were, on the surface, designed to test attitudes toward a given issue (civil service). However, one of the questionnaires was filled with innuendo favorable to civil service, one with propaganda against civil service, one with arguments and suggestion both favorable and unfavorable, while one was neutral. At the end of each questionnaire the subjects were asked to state whether or not they were in favor of civil service. Homogeneous groups from Harvard, New York University, Boston High Schools, and Washington, D.C., schools were tested. These conclusions emerge.

1. Propaganda for civil service had a positive effect on only one group (Harvard) and that was insignificant. On all the other groups this propaganda had a negative effect.
2. Propaganda against civil service had most effect on the Harvard group, creating more neutral attitudes.
3. Propaganda on both sides tends to create more neutral attitudes.
4. All groups are highly prejudiced in favor of civil service. This is in

<sup>14</sup> This study was assisted by a grant-in-aid from the Committee on Research in the Social Sciences at Harvard.

line with the findings of the American Institute of Public Opinion poll for the country at large.

5. The Washington group is least prejudiced of all, but still highly favorable to civil service.

Schanck concludes that where people have an intimate acquaintance with the problem at hand (as the Washington group) propaganda on both sides has most effect, whereas if the issues are known chiefly through the press and books (as with the Harvard group) the two-sided propaganda has least effect. The negative effect of supposedly positive propaganda was most marked with the large city groups (New York and Boston), indicating perhaps that they are more critical of their prejudices.

These findings should interest those concerned with the popularization of the Open Forum as a medium for creating intelligent attitudes toward social issues. Schanck's results seem to indicate that when both sides of a question are presented to groups which have but little intimate knowledge of the problem, there is an even greater tendency for the preestablished prejudice to be

strengthened than if only the opposite point of view is presented. The presentation of the opposing attitude leads chiefly to a feeling of neutrality or ignorance.

## JOURNALISM

*Frank L. Mott (Iowa)*, Chairman of the National Council on Research in Journalism, has issued a list of research studies in progress in the field of journalism. Forty-five projects are listed. Among those of interest to students of public opinion are: A study of political party propaganda technique (R. D. Casey, Minnesota); the history, aims, policies, and social significance of contemporary American magazines (J. E. Drewry, Georgia); the reporting of government affairs in modern public administration (F. E. Merwin, Wisconsin); the relations of presidents of the United States with the American press (J. E. Pollard, Ohio State); trends in the American daily newspaper industry (A. M. Lee, Kansas); analytical methods in the study of news value (L. W. Murphy, Illinois).

H. C.

# GOVERNMENT

HAROLD D. LASSWELL, Editor

This department deals with the informational, publicity, and public-relations activities of government, local, regional, and national; domestic and foreign. Included will be news of recent trends, summaries of research, critical comment, discussion of sources. Research reports will appraise the effect on attitudes resulting from the manipulation of symbols, styles, channels, and forms of organization. Beginning with the next issue regular quarterly correspondence from Washington will be included.

## FEDERAL HOUSING SYMBOLS ARE TIRESOME

Certainly no reform group ever put itself before the American public with a less inviting slogan on its banner than that of "housing," with its almost inevitable association of rabbit hutches or sterilized dairy barns. And indeed, for at least a generation, the housing reformers held meetings attended chiefly by themselves, and published journals which few but they read.

Housing burst before the American public almost overnight when it was found that a clause had been tucked in Title II of the N.I.R.A. authorizing the PWA to include in its public works program projects for "slum clearance and low-cost housing." A similar clause had appeared in the Emergency Relief and Construction Act of 1932, authorizing the RFC to make loans to limited-dividend companies (whatever

they were) for the same purpose; but no single loan had been consummated under this Act before the New Deal.

This is not the place to explain how a small handful of enthusiasts succeeded in having these paragraphs inserted in these two laws: but it is noteworthy that the phrases were themselves slogans rather than well-defined terms that set guideposts for administrative action. Slum clearance and low-cost housing now became a "socially useful self-liquidating public works project of permanent value"; and received the full impetus of the tremendous drive to bring about reemployment. Indeed, the building trades were almost prostrate. Not only the many unions, but the employer groups (including the realtors, of course) were vocally organized to explain that a single building project spread employment through fifty trades, all the way back to mines and forests.



After three years about fifty-five projects, involving about \$140,000,000, are under way (mostly at the foundation stage), and the public seems tired of hearing about housing. Perhaps one reason is that the slogans used were so poorly related to the technical and operating facts. It might have been clear at the start that housing could not be an *emergency* program for reemployment. In the present state of the art, every step from land assembly and design through construction takes months. Moreover, nobody has solved all the interlocking problems of site planning, construction, finance, and taxation so as to permit really "low-cost" housing, if that phrase is supposed to mean housing for the lowest income groups. It was easy for opposition interests to attack the program on the score that rents would inevitably be out of reach of those most needing rehousing.

Undoubtedly the program would have been greatly expedited if large tracts had been purchased on the outskirts of cities; they could usually be acquired from a few owners, instead of involving the lengthy and expensive assembly of hundreds of small lots; and the land costs would have been less. Here again, the administrators were betrayed by imperfectly understood slogans. The great appeal for emotional support was "Root out the slums," "The slums must go." Top New Dealers them-

selves responded to this appeal, perhaps because of backgrounds or close connections in social work; and it seemed impossible to make clear that "slum clearance" and "low-cost housing" did not necessarily describe one operation. Perhaps the cleared slum should be left as a park, and the occupants rehoused elsewhere. The English built suburban cottages for fifteen years before they tackled directly the difficulties of slum clearance. The New Deal boasted that it would profit by English experience, and save the first fifteen years' work.

A minor difficulty in enlisting support for this program was the refusal of civic leaders to admit that there were any slums in their town. So phrases like "blighted areas," "sub-standard areas," "neighborhood rehabilitation," were invented; and special definitions were devised to distinguish a "blighted area" from a "slum."

The crowning catastrophe was the capture of these very slogans by the interests opposed to public housing. Those who felt that public housing would compete with private enterprise (which has never yet built new houses for the lower income groups) backed a governmental scheme to insure institutional loans for modernization and home building. Instead of calling it a Federal Home Mortgage Insurance Administration, they called it the Federal Housing Administration, and backed it with all

the appeal of "private initiative" and "home ownership." (The public housing program was, quite properly, a rental scheme.) The building materials groups put behind FHA all the elaborate publicity techniques which they had developed in two previous privately sponsored national "modernization" campaigns. And the National Association of Real Estate Boards, which duly acquired a committee on housing, promulgated a draft bill setting up "neighborhood rehabilitation districts" to permit landowners to use the power of the state to force dissenters to join in voluntary private schemes. No matter that the "districts" were neither flesh, fish nor fowl, and that the plan as presented was administratively unworkable: it could always be put forward in any community where public housing was proposed, and cause enough counter-irritation to assure defeat of the proposal.

Those opposed to public housing pointed to the administrative confusion resulting from the existence of "forty-seven federal agencies concerned with housing." (This number was reached by including the Federal Reserve Board and the Lighthouse Service.) So the next step was to propose that "all the housing agencies" be required to prepare a unified program. Since, in fact, unrelated and inconsistent activities had come to have the common designation of "housing," it was perhaps not sur-

prising that after a winter of committee meetings they were not able to come to complete agreement.

So, today, everyone is a little tired of hearing about "housing"; and with the "return of prosperity" each Sunday's real estate page boasts of new speculative subdivisions and jerry-built "homes" repeating the unplanned, wasteful activity of 1925-28. The public housing movement urgently needs some new hold on national attention.

CHARLES S. ASCHER

*First Director, National Association  
of Housing Officials (1934)*

## **MUNICIPAL REPORTING TAKEN SERIOUSLY**

Many municipal administrators are no longer too busy to keep the community informed as to what their city governments are doing. The philosophy of governmental reporting has cleared many of the obstacles to general acceptance by the men who run cities. It is clearly recognized in some cities that effective governmental and social progress do not proceed by automatic stages and that the community must be convinced at every step that the governmental program is worthy of support. The idea that understanding is the first prerequisite to support is gaining more acceptance. These conclusions are based on the fact that at least seventy cities are now issuing

annual reports and that the reporting spirit is spreading from its city-manager sources to administrators in other forms of government. It cannot be denied, however, that advances in many cities are paralleled with complete neglect of reporting responsibilities in many others. But with the experience that has accumulated, what reporting media are now being used? Have municipal reporters caught up with technological advance? Are new techniques being devised?

The annual printed report is the standard method of general communication between the administration and the community. To one who has examined critically reports of the last ten years, the sprightly appearance and fresh treatment of the material in the 1936 editions of these reports is a sign of progress. As one observer states, "City officials are beginning to realize that public reporting must be designed to appeal to the public, not to the archivist."<sup>1</sup> Once conscious that the average citizen runs as he reads, the public reporter is ingenious in devising new ways of capturing attention, summarizing details, picturing and graphing data. "Bleed treatment" of cuts (no margins), white-on-black charts, three-year comparisons, Vienna-style *pictographs*, before-and-after contrasts, "human interest" treatment of otherwise dull factual data—all these are a far cry from the solid paragraphs

and endless financial tables which characterized reports of other years. They give some tangible hope that municipal administrators are genuinely concerned about giving the public the solid meat on which sound opinion is based and in a form in which it can be digested.

Some administrators have been ingenious in devising comparisons between municipal services and low-cost luxuries. We find Columbus, Georgia, telling its average taxpayer that it costs only a postage stamp a month for the construction and maintenance of a sewer system which carries off all his household water. Henrico County, Virginia, compares the cost of county services to such familiar items as baseball games, cabbages, and ham and eggs.

Just as annual reports show internal signs of progress, administrators are reaching out for other media of capturing public attention. At least two of these methods are signs that city administrators are keeping pace with modern technology. The motion picture affords a fine opportunity to dramatize municipal functions. The city of Detroit has filmed several reels which by special arrangement were run in movie theaters in serial form. Here city officials were able to bring home to thou-

<sup>1</sup> Elton D. Woolpert, "Annual Reports—1936 Models," in *Public Management*, Vol. XVII, No. 10 (October 1936), p. 297. This article presents the unusual features in the 1936 crop of reports.

sands of citizens, who could not otherwise be reached, the significance of the city's contribution to community life. The drama of a small child being run down in the street was used to illustrate the services of the policeman on the beat who appeared on the scene seconds after the accident occurred, of the city ambulance which rushed the child to the hospital, and of the city hospital and its staff which cared for him and released him two weeks later safe and sound. Winnetka, Illinois, has developed films which bring home to the citizen not only regular municipal services but those of the municipally owned electric light plant as well.

Municipal administrators have not neglected the potentialities of the radio. In several cities department heads are assigned throughout the year to the local station to give accounts of departmental activities. New York City makes good use of its own station—WNYC—for this purpose. The city manager of Trenton, New Jersey, realizing that the financial condition of the city was serious enough to require wide popular support for his new budget, took to the air to present his budget in serial form.

At least one government has borrowed a technique of modern advertising in using billboards to advertise the economy of prompt payment of taxes. The state of Michigan and

the city of Detroit launched an extensive advertising campaign of this type to reduce the burden of tax delinquency.

Another method of sounding public opinion which could be adopted to advantage in most cities is illustrated by the Bureau of Public Information and Complaints established this year in Saginaw, Michigan, by the new city manager. The fact that this bureau is receiving an increasing number of complaints does not mean that the city government is rendering less satisfactory service but that dissatisfactions which once smouldered, only to be released at election time, now find a regular outlet to the satisfaction of city and citizen alike.

Other specialized means of affecting public opinion are the municipal exhibit, the regular leaflet which accompanies tax bills or water bills, budget hearings, and interviews with the press. Most cities appreciate the importance of sound relationships with the local press. Several city managers have secured the cooperation of editors in permitting the city to answer complaints in *The Voice of the People* column on the same day that the complaint is printed—a practice which avoids misunderstanding. Budget hearings continue to make little impression on the community except for the few special groups which interest themselves generally in tax reduction or specific

services such as recreation, juvenile delinquency, infant welfare clinics, etc. The municipal open house, however, received wide public attention in the few communities where it has been tried. Cincinnati's open house attracted 70,000 visitors, Berkeley's 4,000, Kalamazoo's 20,000, Oakland's 8,000. Some cities encourage citizens to inspect technical activities of the city such as the police radio system, the electric light plant, etc., at any time, and Wichita, Kansas, has even invited citizens to ride in squad cars with the objective of enabling them to view police at work. Periodic reports accompanying the tax or water bills enable the city to present evidence of services which the citizen always accepts but less often appreciates. Binghamton, New York, began in September 1936 to issue a semi-monthly one-page mimeographed bulletin dealing with a single municipal problem and asking for suggestions.

Further advances in municipal reporting will be made along the following lines:

1. Analysis by administrators of "consumer response" to reporting methods. In the case of the open house or the budget hearing this is easy. But the annual report is often sent automatically to supposedly interested persons in the city many of whom may promptly file it in the trash pile. Herman C. Beyle has sug-

gested a method of measuring the reception accorded to reports.<sup>2</sup> While this particular method has not yet been applied, many municipal administrators are concerned over the problem of spending city money on an expensive report which may not be read. The city manager of Auburn, Maine, has attempted to follow up his annual report with a questionnaire designed to elicit response to the report.

2. The development of comparable cost-and-service data which will give reporting authorities some yardstick against which to measure performance. This will give reports an objective basis and will take them out of the realm of what are sometimes meaningless value-judgments and useless statistics.

3. Determination of appropriate methods of presenting financial data in such a way that they can be understood by the average citizen.

Many other aspects of municipal reporting merit attention but these three avenues of progress will carry the burden for the more advanced cities in the near future. Meanwhile the pious hope may be expressed that hundreds of cities will emulate the high standard now set by a few in this field of public relations which is so necessary to the preservation of

<sup>2</sup> In *Public Management*, Vol. XVIII, No. 6 (June 1936), pp. 163-6.



expert administration under popular control.

CLARENCE E. RIDLEY  
*Executive Director, International  
City Managers' Association*

## FOUND: RECORDS OF THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC INFORMATION

For almost two decades investigators from our own land have been ransacking the European archives on almost every phase of the "battle for the mind" in the World War, turning out a goodly number of books and monographs on the subject, while nearly 25 five-foot filing cabinets, bulging with the records of our own Committee on Public Information during the World War, lay untouched here in Washington. Indeed, the only definitive chronicle of the important work of the Committee on Public Information still remains George Creel's personal narrative, *How We Advertised America*, written nearly seventeen years ago.

President Woodrow Wilson, it will be recalled, shortly after the entry of the United States into the World War appointed the Committee on Public Information composed of Newton D. Baker, Secretary of War; Josephus Daniels, Secretary of the Navy; Robert L. Lansing, Secretary of State; and, as Chairman, George Creel.

"In no degree was the Committee an agency of censorship, a machinery of concealment or repression. Its emphasis throughout was on the open and the positive. At no point did it seek or exercise authorities under those war laws that limited the freedom of speech and press. In all things, from first to last, without halt or change, it was a plain publicity proposition, a vast enterprise in salesmanship, the world's greatest adventure in advertising."<sup>3</sup>

The Committee's usefulness came to an end with the signing of the Armistice, and the slow process of liquidation was taking place, when on June 30, 1919, Congress legislated Mr. Creel's organization out of existence and an official report of its activities on the Government Printing Office's presses was destroyed.

The headquarters of this Committee, which, oddly enough, were located next door to the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace on Jackson Place, a short distance from the White House, were dismantled forthwith. Records and filing cabinets were hauled away to repose in unknown basements of government storehouses.

The writer undertook last summer to run down the war-time records of

<sup>3</sup> George Creel, *How We Advertised America* (New York, 1920), p. 4. Quotation used by express permission of Harper & Brothers, Publishers.

the Committee on Public Information. This proved no easy task. Mr. George Creel, when interviewed in Washington, had not the faintest idea of their fate, and expressed no small interest himself in knowing what had become of them. The bibliographical cards at the Library of Congress shed no light on the subject. A trip to the library of the Army War College at Fort Humphreys proved more fruitful, however, when Lt. Col. Charles W. Thomas, the librarian, found a card stating that these records were last known to be in the custody of the Army Industrial College, which is in a wing of the old Munitions Building of the War Department at 20th and Constitution Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. Here indeed they proved to be, and the writer obtained permission to go through the filing cabinets stored in the basement of this building which contained the records of the Committee on Public Information.

The records remain intact virtually as they had been deposited here almost a score of years ago, their whereabouts known, probably, to not more than half a dozen persons. The files contain correspondence on every possible phase of the Committee's activities, accounting ledgers, speeches of the "four-minute men," suggestions from hundreds of citizens for making the nation war-minded, photographs in profusion,

and thousands of copies of the literature of the Committee. Lengthy and illuminating reports from the Committee's representatives in almost every country in the world show with what devastating efficiency we advertised America, particularly in neutral countries. Many carefully worked out peace schemes were sent the Committee to be carefully filed away. One of the real problems of the Committee was the method of selling the war to the German-Americans about whose sympathy there was of course considerable doubt, and there are several drawers of correspondence as to the ways and means worked out for capturing the loyalties not only of the German-American, but of all the foreign-born. A dissertation might well be written on the material in these cabinets as to the methods used by the Committee in presenting the facts of the war to educational institutions, and there are scores of letters from educators volunteering their services to Mr. Creel.

The writer learned from Dr. Nelson Vance Russell, Chief, Division of Reference of the National Archives Building, that these war records will probably find their way into the stacks of the National Archives Building, under the authority of a resolution adopted by the National Archives Council on February 10, 1936, which empowered the Archivist of the United States to requisition

for transfer into his custody from any agency of our government, among other classes, "any archives or records of any Federal agency that has gone out of existence unless its functions have been transferred to the agency which has custody of its records." This clause would appear to cover the case of the records of the Committee on Public Information. They will not, of course, be

of research value until they are classified and arranged, but it is to be hoped that in the not too distant future, these records will be available in the National Archives Building, and an objective study of the activities of the Committee on Public Information will be possible.

CEDRIC E. A. LARSON  
*Library of Congress*

# ORGANIZED GROUPS

E. PENDLETON HERRING, Editor

This department embraces political parties, trade associations, labor unions, professional organizations, and the host of leagues, societies, and councils that bring men together for some common purpose. Our concern is not with the social, economic, or political policies of such groups or with the weaknesses or merits of their respective objectives. Attention will be centered upon problems relevant to all organized effort to secure a cohesive following and to rally public support. Brief accounts of the publicity and organizational work of relevant groups together with descriptions of current propaganda campaigns will be presented. Through a persistent sampling of such activities we may develop a useful clearing house for both the man of affairs and the scholar.

## CHANGING THE PUBLIC MIND ABOUT PATRONAGE

Why groups of our fellow citizens engage in campaigns, and what comes of such efforts, offer fertile fields of inquiry to those who would understand mass action. Even a brief analysis of the activities of the National League of Women Voters during the past two and a half years to "change the public mind about patronage" indicates some of the complex elements involved in a campaign worthy of the name. Since the League recently announced the inauguration of the second phase of its campaign, this is an appropriate time to review the first phase.

Between the national conventions of 1934 and 1936, League members in some 600 communities were engaged in a two-fold undertaking: they sought to expose the fallacies

in popular assumptions that the spoils system has been the inevitable concomitant of democracy, and they offered a positive program of reform which public determination could translate into action.

*Words and Slogans.* Discussion with Professor Harold D. Lasswell, Dr. Leonard D. White, Louis Brownlow, and others reenforced the conviction of the League's leaders that new phrases must be found more persuasive than "civil service reform" and "merit system." So a slogan contest during the summer and fall of 1935 set the membership at phrase-making and aroused a public that seems to have an unfailing interest in competitions. A committee consisting of Margaret Culkin Banning, Mrs. Albert J. Beveridge, Dean Virginia Gildersleeve, Ernest K. Lindley, and Charles G. Ross selected the winner: "Find the Man

for the Job—Not the Job for the Man." This and others such as "Trained Personnel Does the Nation's Work Well" and "To the Victor Belongs the Responsibility for Good Government" have been turned to good account.

*Posters, Fliers, and the Radio.* If the entries in the slogan contest were an index of public attitudes, there could be no doubt that the success of an opinion-making campaign depends upon simplicity of argument, coupled with appeals to the eye and ear. Several Leagues held poster contests, billboards on the campaign appeared in Cleveland and elsewhere, movie-goers were confronted with slides depicting the evils of the spoils system, cartoonists plunged the Elephant and the Donkey into fresh dilemmas, the housewives of St. Louis were reminded of the high cost of inefficient government when they sought out the grocery advertisements. School children and their elders participated in essay contests.

Radio stations in at least eighteen states gave time for over 130 broadcasts by members of the League. A coast-to-coast hook-up facilitated observance of "Personnel Day" in January 1936, when representatives of three parties and three units of government—Secretary of Commerce Roper, Governor Fitzgerald of Michigan, Mayor LaGuardia of New York—spoke in behalf of the campaign to an audience that included

hundreds of "listening-in parties" and gatherings running into the thousands in larger centers.

Beginning with the meetings in January, which was "Personnel Month," a flier was distributed with *Short Answers Showing Why the Merit System, Not the Spoils System, Should Be Used to Fill Government Jobs*. By October 1936 more than 40,000 copies had been sold. It has been reprinted in magazines and newspapers and its arguments have formed the basis of innumerable conversations and speeches. Like practically every other device used in the campaign, it was the product of many minds.

*Preparation of the Membership.* The desire of League members to be up and doing about the campaign has proved the best stimulus to further study. Hundreds of study groups, most of them meeting at least four times, used the League publication, *Trained Personnel for Public Service*, plus state and local material. A nationwide contest promoted rapid distribution of the personnel pamphlet, of which over 7,500 copies have been sold. Of course the report of the Commission of Inquiry on Public Service Personnel was invaluable; 57 per cent of the sales of the civic edition were made to League members. Other regular methods of work on the League program have included surveys of personnel administration, at-



tendance at meetings of civil service commissions, and conferences with public employees. In the second year of the campaign, 25 state Leagues reported 600 general meetings addressed by government officials, political scientists, party workers, and others.

*Enlisting 'Citizens' Groups.* The readiness of other groups to join in the campaign has been notable from the outset. Members of the national board and staff have addressed conventions of various organizations; state and local officers and members have spoken before taxpayers' leagues, Rotarians, Kiwanians, chambers of commerce, church societies, teachers' institutes, American Legion posts, advertising clubs, college alumni, labor groups, women's organizations, Junior Leagues, even gatherings of laundrymen. Eight of the states most active in the campaign held classes in which some two hundred League speakers were trained. Incomplete reports show that in twenty states representatives of the League of Women Voters reached approximately 1,200 organizations.

State and local application of the campaign was stressed, and of course also the nonpartisan character of the League's interest. One of the most difficult tasks has been to revive public interest where weak laws or maladministration have brought "civil service" into disrepute.

*Approaches to the Parties.* One of the motivating forces behind the campaign is the conviction of League members that, far from being an asset, patronage is a liability to the political parties. Forums on the question: "Can the parties live without patronage?" have been characterized by the same lively discussion in many parts of the country that the topic provoked among members of Congress when it was first posed by the National League.

But parties think in terms of votes, and public officials are in the long run guided by the voice of their constituents. So the League initiated a drive for signatures to cards (patriotically decorated with red, white, and blue stripes) petitioning the political parties to replace patronage with the merit system in all units of government. A good many public officials proved willing to sign. By the time of the major party conventions, a quarter of a million signatures supported the League's argument that all party platforms should contain strong planks on public personnel. Whether ten times as many cards would have made the final planks stronger—or what they might have said had there been no personnel campaign—are matters of speculation. In any event, work on the petition cards proved an effective "every member" project and the public interest thus generated undoubt-

edly helped make spoils an issue in the 1936 election.

As usual in pre-election periods, Leagues held candidates' meetings, published the replies to candidates' questionnaires, and in other ways emphasized the interest of their members in certain public questions. In 1936 these included legislation to clinch the gains under the executive order placing Presidential postmasters in the classified service, repeal of the "married persons'" clause, and general extension of sound personnel practices.

*Publicity.* Probably not since its Get-Out-the-Vote campaigns of a decade ago has the League of Women Voters been so continuously in the public eye. The nationwide character of the campaign, the ingenuity of state and local branches in tackling their problems, and, above all, timeliness in relation to a concatenation of events of general public interest, made the campaign news. No complete analysis of publicity is available, but reports show a total of over 900 editorials in newspapers in every state except Arizona specifically mentioning the National League. Indiana led, with Minnesota, Ohio, New York, Wisconsin, and Missouri following. Editorials on state and local work reach several thousand. In the spring of 1936, twenty-three state Leagues reported some 1,600 columns of publicity during the preceding twelve months.

The campaign has been the subject of magazine articles, radio news comment, and speeches in Congress. But League members would be among the first to point out that a public-opinion-making campaign achieves success as its objective becomes a matter of such general concern that people often forget who started it.

*Public Action.* Although the translation of public opinion into governmental action constitutes the second phase of the campaign, proposed bills and charter reforms have already provided rallying points for public interest in all sections of the country. In Massachusetts, work has been focused on modification of veterans' preference, in Connecticut on state reorganization, in New York on county reorganization, in Pennsylvania and several Great Lakes states on the establishment of personnel systems, in Cleveland, Louisville, Atlanta, St. Louis, Tulsa, Denver, and Santa Monica on improvement in local conditions. Interest in the federal civil service has already been mentioned.

*League Campaign Organization.* Three factors seems to have precipitated the decision to launch the personnel campaign. First, many members had seen their work for more adequate child welfare services, better labor laws, and protection of consumers' interests jeopardized by incompetent administration, and the

situation had been aggravated by the depression. Second, years of work for improved governmental machinery had demonstrated the strategic importance of efficient personnel. Third, singleness of purpose would provide driving force in an opinion-making campaign. Leaders of the League saw also in the campaign a fresh unifying element that would help build a stronger organization.

In the last analysis, whatever effectiveness the campaign has achieved is traceable to the existence of a fairly well integrated national, state, and local organization with clear channels of communication and established methods of work. But the spark that kindled action and has fanned the flames is the imagination of the national campaign committee, its subcommittees, and the personnel chairmen in the states, under the leadership of the national campaign chairman, Mrs. George Gellhorn. Working with their respective League boards, they have taken the *Campaign Handbook*, the fliers, pamphlets, and petition cards, and supplemented them with devices to put the campaign across in their communities. What has been done has been done with infinitesimal budgets, very limited staff assistance, and an organization not equally strong in all its parts. It remains for the second phase of the campaign, and possibly several others, to show to what ex-

tent the American people can change their minds about patronage.

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## INTERSTATE COOPERATION

As every student of international affairs is aware, it is extremely difficult in the absence of specific racial, religious, or commercial ties to bring bureaucratic organizations into friendly working relationships. The temptation is strong to win economic or political advantage by the adoption of competitive regulations to avoid blame by the simple expedient of "buck-passing."

What is true of the international situation is true of the domestic one, although only recently have students of American state government awakened to the parallelism. Text-book writers on the whole are still unregenerate and remain Eyeless in Gaza. The corporation-charters racket practised in Delaware, South Dakota, and other states; the divorce racket of Nevada; the income and inheritance tax racket of Southern states—all can be traced to the lack of a unifying link among the independent state bureaucracies. To eliminate these competitions has become the goal of that group whose interest in sub-national units of government is dic-

tated not by a desire to forestall effective governmental regulation of certain business activities, but by a genuine faith in the "values" of a federal system—decentralization of power, education of the citizen, and opportunity for experimentation.

To use the words of one of the leaders of this more altruistic group, Henry W. Toll, "the claims of states' rights must be justified by a demonstration of states' competence." Mr. Toll and his followers have come to the conclusion that "states' competence" is to be obtained through "interstate cooperation."

Accordingly, Mr. Toll through his magazine, *State Government* (which is the official organ of the Council of State Governments of which he is Executive Director), has begun a campaign for "interstate cooperation"—a campaign which, thus far, at least, exemplifies remarkable success in the precarious field of public relations.

The groundwork was laid by transforming *State Government*, which circulates widely among state officials and legislators, into a journal of interstate cooperation. Articles and news notes emphasized the theme; and changes were rung on every synonym of the word "cooperation" (few of which are satisfactory, it may be noted). While care was taken to avoid both specific charges against non-cooperators and strong recommendations on particular issues, the

potential value of "interstate cooperation" in dealing with numbers of knotty problems was indicated. Moreover, those state governments which were evincing an interest in cooperative methods received approving publicity. To quote a single paragraph:

Rivers have an uncontrollable tendency to flow across state boundaries and men have a largely uncontrolled tendency to pollute them. As a result, numbers of once lovely streams have become sources of contamination. In the November issue of this magazine appeared a map of interstate water problems, which indicates how great is the need for joint state action in this field. Recognizing the need for action of more than one state on this problem, the Pennsylvania Commission on Interstate Cooperation has called a conference on stream pollution.<sup>1</sup>

Maps recording progress of the movement for interstate cooperation were published every other month.

An idealist but not a cloistered one, Mr. Toll is acquainted with the techniques of a skilful publicist. Therefore, "cooperating" officials can see their pictures, their titles, their records on the truly handsome pages of *State Government*. Moreover, the magazine is attractive in format, always careful and sometimes happy in its color and design scheme for the cover, ingenious in its description of the "capitol of the month," which with the accompanying illustration, usually forms the frontis-

<sup>1</sup> *State Government*, March 1936, p. 51.

piece. On the gastronomic theory of the appetizer, the articles which are limited to factual material and mild editorializing of the type described above, are heralded by titles, sometimes addicted to alliteration, sometimes to punning, and habitually to provocative surface irrelevancy.

Other possibilities for publicity were not left unworked. The Council issued press releases, based on these magazine articles or on other happenings in the "field of interstate cooperation," skilfully attempting to select "leads" which would arrest interest but would not excite opposition. For example, interstate cooperation was sometimes pictured as "an alternative to federal centralization" but never as an enemy to federal activity. Philosophically, the mean may be golden, but newspaper revenue tends to proceed from the extreme. It was natural that more space in the editorial than in news columns of the daily press was devoted to the movement for interstate cooperation, but fairly satisfactory results were secured in both places. Of the magazine articles concerning the campaign, that in *Time* probably attracted most widespread attention.

It was no part of the Council's plan to leave its theory suspended in a rarefied atmosphere. To translate it into practical mechanisms was the important task. When the first definite goal was determined—the creation of Commissions on Inter-

state Cooperation in each state—form letters (usually dictated as if to an individual) were sent to legislative leaders, officials, and other present and former friends of the Council of State Governments to urge creation of Commissions on Interstate Cooperation. On occasion the letters were supplemented by telegrams and, in a few instances, by personal visits. Records of progress were published in *State Government* and called to the attention of legislators and officials.

The success of these efforts was amazingly rapid. Although the form of the Commission on Interstate Cooperation was not finally determined until March 1935 (after adjournment of a considerable number of regular sessions of state legislatures), by June of 1936 a third of the states had created such commissions by legislative enactment. Since most state legislatures meet in regular session biennially in odd numbered years, undoubtedly the adjournments of 1937 will see commissions established in most of the states.

Optimism should be temperate, of course. It remains to be seen whether the creation of new mechanisms will mean that the condition of "interstate cooperation" has won an effective place in the thought processes of state legislators and officials. Our experience with rapidly established agencies like the State conservation departments of the first decade of



this century does not look promising for those rapidly established commissions of the fourth decade.

In one specific case, at least, the future of the movement seems assured. The legislative proposals for interstate cooperation in crime control made by the Interstate Commission on Crime of the Council of State Governments received very favorable treatment by the legislatures of 1936. This case cannot validly be considered typical, however, for here two waves of propaganda for crime control and for interstate cooperation merged into one objective. Readers of *PUBLIC OPINION QUARTERLY* can observe for themselves whether the methods used above will lead to more effective "interstate cooperation."

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## **TRADE PROMOTION BY TRADE ASSOCIATIONS**

Public relations as an objective activity of trade associations is not subject to exact definition. Trade promotion programs involving efforts to widen existing markets and find new markets are frequently considered a phase of public relations. Trade promotion itself, however, involves a great variety of separate activities, and assumes many forms in many different industries.

While trade associations in increasing number have initiated trade pro-

motion programs during the past year, this is not a new or untried activity. In the early part of this century promotional campaigns were launched by cooperative associations in certain segments of the food industry. Within a short time after the introduction into this country of the Hawaiian pineapple, in 1902, the growers started a consumers' campaign to introduce the new fruit. Before the end of 1909, the Rice Association had prepared a campaign. About that time the California Fruit Growers Exchange developed an aggressive advertising program.

By 1919 the number of trade associations which were conducting promotional campaigns had increased considerably. In that year less than \$40,000 was spent, while in 1929 over \$6,000,000 was spent for advertising by trade associations in thirty-seven national publications. A survey of trade associations, conducted in 1930, indicated that, out of 500 associations reporting, 164 carried on cooperative advertising. This same survey indicated that 34 per cent of the national and international associations reporting were engaged in cooperative advertising activities.

A survey made in 1930 by the Trade Association Department of the Chamber of Commerce of the United States showed that 99 associations spent over \$17,000,000 in advertising and publicity during the years 1928-

1930, inclusive. An indication of the extent of association advertising in magazines is revealed in reports issued by the Curtis Publishing Company, covering advertisements of associations in thirty-five national magazines, as represented in the following table:

1928	\$5,960,956
1929	6,199,350
1930	4,874,660
1931	3,792,069
1932	1,412,581
1933	1,348,303
1934	1,517,213
1935	1,038,656

The American Trade Association Executives conducted a survey which was released in October 1936, which showed that 71 per cent of the 110 associations which filed a list of their activities were engaged in market development and sales promotional work.

The total expenditures for cooperative advertising in 1936 will undoubtedly exceed similar expenditures during any one of the past five years and will possibly exceed the peak year of 1929. Comparisons of cooperative magazine advertising do not, however, constitute a fair criterion of the extent of promotional efforts. In the earlier campaigns it frequently happened that a major portion of the funds was expended in magazine or newspaper advertising. Today trade executives look upon advertising as only one phase

of a promotional program. An analysis of the programs carried on by trade associations indicates that the following activities are considered a phase of their promotional effort:

1. Technical and scientific research
2. Market research
3. Advertising and publicity
4. Field service
5. Systematized education.

#### *Technical and Scientific Research.*

Trade associations today maintain their own laboratories and promote technical research in educational institutions and governmental agencies. In some cases the laboratories of members of the industry are utilized or, in other cases, plans are made for the correlation of research conducted by individual companies. The laboratories maintained by the National Canners Association conduct research investigations designed to give information regarding the fundamental principles pertaining to canning in order that the quality of the product may be improved and made more uniform, causes of spoilage understood and, so far as possible, overcome. In the laboratories of the American Gas Association various gas appliances are tested, as a means of assuring the public that the articles conform to certain engineering standards which have been established by the industry as desirable.

The American Dry Milk Institute has had considerable experience in opening new markets for its product

by discovering new uses for it. A \$600 research project resulted in a new product—package dry-milk solids. Having discovered it, the Institute promoted it. In 1935, the Government purchased for relief families 15,749,000 pounds, which had at least a \$2,000,000 value.

The 1930 survey showed that, out of 500 associations reporting, 141 carried on technical research. While some of these research activities were possibly not correlated to any promotional campaign, most of them were established for the purpose of increasing the efficiency of the project or developing new uses. Favorable customer and public reaction is thus promoted.

*Market Research.* Market research, which attempts to ascertain facts with respect to sources of supply and markets upon which efficient buying and especially the selling policies of an industry may be established, is frequently considered an essential part of a well-rounded promotional program. Such research attempts to locate actual and potential demand for individual products and at the same time to discover what variations of the product may best satisfy existing or potential demand. In terms of trade-association activity, it involves an analysis of distribution channels and distribution policies, an analysis of customer contacts and consumer returns, and a study of dis-

tribution costs, in some cases by customers and territories.

*Advertising and Publicity.* Advertising and publicity have constituted in some cases major phases of promotional programs. "Say It With Flowers!" and "Save the Surface and You Save All!" are typical slogans which have been established in the public mind through cooperative advertising and publicity. That advertising for promotional purposes is not restricted to magazines, newspapers, and the radio is evidenced by the emphasis placed upon expositions.

The American Trade Association Executives created an award for outstanding achievement by a trade association in service to its own industry, to industrial development at large, and to the public. The bronze medallion, emblematic of the award, went in 1936 to the National Machine Tool Builders Association. Popular outcries had arisen against the machine age and machines; technological advances were being blamed for unemployment; demagogues were fostering distrust of a social and economic order based upon mass production and made possible through the use of machinery. The Machine Tool Builders Association agreed that some means must be found to start a movement toward modernization of equipment and to apprise thinking people of their dependence on machine tools and related machinery. The industry

decided upon an industrial exposition as a method of launching a continuous educational effort to counteract the widespread anti-machine propaganda. Attendance was by invitation only, yet 60,000 persons visited the exhibits of 238 machine tool builders. Tied in with this program was the collection of statistics, compiled by the National Industrial Conference Board, relating to the effect of mechanization on employment.

Reports from other associations indicate that expositions held during the past year have resulted in a definite increase in the sale of new materials and equipment. At expositions the purchasing public visualizes the technical and scientific developments in equipment and supplies. New ideas and methods for industrial progress are stimulated.

*Systematized Education and Field Service.* Associations which originally relied primarily upon advertising, later realized the importance of having the individual who came in direct contact with the purchaser fully acquainted with the nature of the product. The benefits of national advertising which result in bringing the customer into the store to buy may be nullified by a lack of understanding on the part of the salesman.

Recently the Toy Manufacturers of the U.S.A. issued a sales manual which was extensively distributed among department stores and other

distributors of toys. The educational programs launched by the laundry-owners and ice manufacturers for laundry and ice routemen were aimed to increase efficiency and service of the individuals who came in contact with the customers. There is evidence that such educational programs have been helpful in extending the markets of the industry. These educational efforts have taken many forms, ranging from the issuance of a sales manual to a continuous instructional program in educational institutions. Both the National Association of Dyers and Cleaners of the United States and Canada and the Laundryowners National Association of the United States and Canada maintain their own headquarters which are utilized not only for the general conduct of the associations, but also for training students who devote eight weeks or more to continuous study at the national headquarters where model plant facilities are available.

In a number of cases associations have employed a field staff as a means of acquainting the users or the distributors of the products of an industry with the value of such products and their technical uses.

Another feature has been the promotion of special weeks or special days, during which nationwide emphasis may be given to the particular product or service. Better Homes Week, Cotton Week, Raisin Week, and

Restaurant Week are typical of a large number of special weeks which have been established by trade associations. They are usually accompanied by national and local advertising, publicity, and special events through which the merits of particular products or services are made known to the general public.

Cooperative effort for the extension of markets has not been limited to new or rapidly developing industries. Only recently the anthracite industry has launched an extensive campaign as a means of stopping the downward spiral and of regaining lost markets. With the rapid development of automobiles, trucks, and tractors one might assume that "Old Dobbin" has been discarded. But through the cooperation of a number of associations in the saddlery, hay and grain, and farm implement fields, a national promotional campaign has been carried on. Pamphlets and circulars have been printed by the Horse and Mule Association of America on the advantages of horse and mule power on the farm.

The uses and values of radios and automobiles, little known when the early cooperative campaigns were launched, are promoted today by trade associations. In fact, new and old, durable and consumer goods industries now recognize that trade association promotional programs, including advertising, research, education or publicity, may be carried on effectively at a comparatively small cost to each individual member of the industry. Such programs have not, however, anticipated the elimination of individual company promotional efforts. On the other hand, many campaigns have aimed to tie in the individual company's activities with the national program. Based on a comprehensive study of underlying factors, the nature of the product, its uses, and the distribution channels and policies, the industry is enabled to develop plans peculiar to its needs which will be most helpful in creating an understanding on the part of the purchasing public.

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*Chamber of Commerce of the  
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# COMMUNICATIONS

O. W. RIEGEL, Editor

A notable intensification of conflict between political and economic interest-groups has, within recent months, brought into the open, sensationally in many instances, a number of basic problems relating to the exploitation of the instrumentalities for disseminating news, opinion, and entertainment. The chronicling of all events in the field of communications having reference to public-opinion management is beyond the scope of this review. The purpose will be to underscore a few recent events and circumstances which seem to have special significance in relation to broad questions of public opinion.

## PRESS, RADIO, AND THE SPANISH CIVIL WAR

Civil war in Spain calls attention with peculiar force to the difficulties of maintaining neutrality safeguards under modern conditions. In addition to the direct interest of neutrals in events on the Spanish peninsula, including the probable effects of a victory for either side upon the European balance of power, the presence in the conflict of political and economic issues of international significance has tended to make the Spanish conflict in fact a "proxy war," and has roused grave fears that other nations may be involved in a general European or world war.

Recent discussions of the neutrality problem have tended to place the primary emphasis upon basic considerations of economic self-interest and national honor. While this emphasis is doubtless correct, another factor of great practical and immediate importance is the manner in

which the sympathies of national and international publics are involved on one side or the other through the exploitation of communicational channels. The experience of the World War showed that propaganda and censorship, and the denial of propaganda channels to some of the belligerents, was of critical importance over and above basic considerations of economic interest. The World War demonstrated that propaganda was not only effective in building up habits of thought which ultimately dictated national policy, but also that, in the moment of crisis, it often constituted the decisive factor in choosing peace or war.

Several circumstances lend special importance to the Spanish conflict in relation to the neutrality problem and opinion formation and control. The fact that the basic issues between the Socialist-Communist-Liberal and Fascist-Nazi-Conserva-

tive groups in Spain also agitate the domestic life of other nations has been noted above. In the second place, it is now possible to study the utilization and effects of new and improved means of world communication, notably in long- and short-wave radio broadcasting. The wireless outlet of the Central Powers in the World War, it should be remembered, was in the main limited to the POZ transmitter at Nauen, which transmitted in dots and dashes capable of being picked up by a relatively small number of wireless operators. In the third place, nations which have pursued neutrality policies to the extent of passing laws to safeguard neutrality now have an opportunity to test in some measure the effectiveness of those laws in the face of propaganda pressure from abroad and at home.

In respect to the press, it is apparent that newspapers and press associations have shown great energy and enterprise in reporting a war which, because of chaotic conditions in Spain and the inevitable censorship and propaganda activities of the belligerent factions, has presented unusual difficulties in news gathering. The manner in which this news has been treated in the world press, however, ranges all the way from a scrupulous effort to be impartial and quieting to deliberate provocations to participation in the war.

While the control of this news in dictator countries has been absolute, serving, as would be expected, to further the foreign and domestic aims of the régimes in power, the unchecked exploitation of war news for nationalistic ends calls attention to the total absence of international restraints upon provocative distortions. Proposals within League of Nations circles and among professional newspapermen that an international system of supervision be established to check biased news have gone unheeded, and the populations of dictator countries are generally without access to any information about the Spanish war, or to opinions as to the issues involved, other than the news and opinions authorized by the national government.

In countries in which the control of news is not so strict, the impulse to "take sides" has often resulted in the publication of news stories, headlines, and photographs which could not be called strictly neutral in content or intention. Where national populations are divided on issues which are being disputed in Spain, it is natural that either suspicion or proof of bias in news reports should rouse indignation and protest among certain groups. In England, for instance, a Communist demonstration on July 29 in front of the *Daily Mail* offices protested what was considered unfair reporting of the Spanish war

by the Associated Newspapers' group (Lord Rothermere), and an effort was made during August and September to persuade members of the printers' union to refuse to set and print editorial matter about Spain which conflicted with workers' interests. In the United States, J. David Stern was threatened with a Catholic boycott for printing in the *Philadelphia Record* an editorial supporting the Popular Front government in Spain, and better relations with Catholic readers were restored only after a second editorial was published correcting some of the impressions created by the first. In France, to cite still another example, Maurice Pujol, editor of the Monarchist *Action Française*, was arrested for spreading "false news" which compromised France's neutrality position.

*Symbols.* Emotional involvement in the cause of one of the beligerent Spanish factions may be seen, for example, in the choice of nomenclature for distinguishing the opponents. Rothermere's London papers refer to the government forces as "Reds" and to the rebels as "Patriots." Government forces are generally "Reds" or "Communists" in Hearst newspapers. To Left papers in both England and America the rebel forces are "Fascists," and the government forces "Loyalists." All of these terms evoke associative patterns of thought and feeling which

help to condition the neutral's attitude toward the issues and persons involved in the rebellion. The anti-Government junta at Burgos has taken note of the emotional provocativeness of the designations in use by requiring that foreign correspondents must not, on pain of suppression or expulsion, use the term "Rebels" for the "Nationalists," or "Loyalists" for the Madrid government forces. Neutral newspapers seeking to avoid a tendentious terminology have generally agreed on the use of the terms "Loyalist" and "Rebel," although these words are obviously symbols carrying heavy connotative loads. The problem of nomenclature would become still more complicated if the "Rebels" were to win the capital and the greater part of Spanish territory, for they would then become the government forces, or "Loyalists," and the present "Loyalists" would become "Rebels." In many places it is doubtful whether the stereotypes created by the present terminology could accommodate this reversal of rôles.

While the agreeableness or disagreeableness of news from Spain to foreign sympathizers depends largely upon the actual military successes or failures of the opposing sides, the war has demonstrated the propaganda value of supplying correspondents with large quantities of "news," whether it is fact or fiction. The demand for conflict news,

especially of the sensational type, has been high, and the faction which has supplied the greatest amount of this news, either by permitting correspondents to visit battle areas or by distributing "handouts," has generally received the better press. Charges of deliberate faking, especially in respect to atrocity stories, have been flung back and forth between the Spanish factions and between rival groups of sympathizers in neutral countries. Although charges of fakery are difficult to authenticate, especially while the war is in progress, there is evidence that in a number of instances the demands of home newspaper offices for agreeably sensational evidences of the skulduggery of the unpopular side have resulted in the sending of news and pictures of questionable accuracy.

*Radio.* The radio since the outbreak of the Spanish revolt has been especially interesting in relation to the problem of the effects of a new vehicle of foreign propaganda upon neutrality. Although radio propaganda was used by both sides in the Italo-Ethiopian war, the radio resources of the Ethiopians were scarcely comparable with those of the Italians, nor were the sympathies of peoples in other countries so closely involved as in the case of the conflict in Spain. Modern techniques of radio broadcasting have been tested for the first time under conditions of

actual warfare in Spain, with the greater part of the total radio receiving sets of the world within earshot of rival Spanish transmitters or of transmitters in countries sympathetic to one side or the other in the Spanish conflict.

Spanish broadcasting stations, notably the 20-kilowatt short-wave station EAQ at Madrid and the rebel station of lesser power at Seville, have, since the outbreak of hostilities, sprayed neutrals with their respective versions of the events and issues of the war. Radio listeners, especially if they have access to short-wave sets, may eavesdrop on what amounts virtually to an international war of broadcast propaganda. The radio war immediately involved other countries, with Germany and Italy offering programs of news inspired in favor of the rebel cause, and the U.S.S.R. and France slanting broadcast news in favor of the Loyalists. News announcers for short-wave programs from German stations, for instance, customarily refer to rebel forces as "Nationalists" and to government forces as "Reds," and bombard the short-wave audience with allegations of Soviet arming and victualing of Popular Front forces. On the other hand, alleged anti-German agitation by Soviet and Spanish broadcasting stations was the basis of formal protests recently sent by the German government to both Moscow and Madrid.

That the objective of inspired news broadcasts, as of distorted newspaper reports, is to shake the peoples of other countries from their neutral positions and persuade them to "take sides" is obvious from the assiduity with which propaganda activities are pursued. The radio log shows between twenty and thirty short-wave news broadcasts daily from Europe in the English language and between thirty and forty in foreign tongues. The increased use of radio for propaganda is due only in part to the directness and vividness of voice appeals. It is due even more to the knowledge of national political strategists that broadcast news is not subject to regulation and censorship by governments or editors, and that prohibitions of reception may be evaded because sensitive modern receiving sets may operate without antenna wire in evidence.

Two general principles in respect to public opinion may tentatively be drawn from the Spanish War experience. The first is that although the international communicational system has achieved a remarkable efficiency, little reliance may be placed on it in a moment of crisis for the complete and accurate information which might dissolve that crisis. The second principle, corollary to the first, is that modern efficiency of press and radio seem to represent an increased hazard in the maintenance of neutrality of thought,

without which no true neutrality is possible. In the formulation of neutrality policies, modern propaganda resources must be taken into account, and provision made for resistance to, or dilution of, propaganda provocations. An intimation of the dangers of the situation was offered in the bombing of the United States destroyer *Kane* in Spanish waters by an unidentified airplane on Sunday, August 30. Tension and indignation created by screaming newspaper headlines in such incidents as this prepare a receptive audience for immediate propaganda suggestions from foreign broadcasters and news agencies. Fortunately, in the case of the bombing of the *Kane*, the calmness of the State Department checked any tendency to exaggerate the seriousness of this attack upon the national honor.

*Regulation.* Groups in various countries have indicated their awareness of the danger of propaganda to the maintenance of neutrality. In the United States, Congress has granted powers to some departments of the government which, if not nullified by unfavorable court interpretations, might be used to suppress the dissemination of unneutral news and opinion. Chapter 2 of the Criminal Code of the United States, for example, lists a number of offenses against neutrality. Some of them, such as the one which forbids anyone in the United States knowingly



to provide or prepare a means for or furnish money for or take part in any military or naval expedition or enterprise to be carried on from there against the territory of any foreign country with which the United States is at peace, might possibly be interpreted as applying to certain kinds of unneutral propaganda. Section 606 (c) of the 1934 Communications Act provides that "in order to preserve the neutrality of the United States" the President may temporarily suspend the regulations governing radio stations in the United States, close stations, or turn them over to government departments. Another potential check on provocations to unneutrality is the Federal Communications Commission's power to revoke or refuse to renew licenses of stations if such action will, in the language of Section 312 (b) of the Communications Act, "promote the public interest, convenience, and necessity, or the provisions of this Act or if any treaty ratified by the United States will be more fully complied with." Special measures might also conceivably be taken against unneutral propaganda under such neutrality proclamations as the President issued in 1935 during the Italo-Ethiopian war.

One objection to governmental regulations to safeguard neutrality in speech and press is that when they are actually enforced they may propel the nation still further in the

direction of war. At least, this was the apparent result of several efforts to prevent unneutral conduct of American citizens before America entered the World War. In the second place, legislative and executive efforts to punish the publishers of propaganda and of false or provocative news are almost certain to run counter to traditions of press and radio freedom. This would be especially true of any effort to regulate the contents of the press in the United States. A third and still more serious weakness of the legal safeguards is that they include no practical way of stopping propaganda transmitted from abroad by means of short-wave radio. In America the chief safeguards against provocations to unneutrality, especially in the early stages of an international crisis, remain the discretion and sense of public responsibility of editors and radio station managers and the sophistication of radio listeners. It has not yet been shown that either of these safeguards is dependable when an international crisis intensifies.

O. W. R.

## NEW FRONTIERS IN RADIO

Current trends suggest the strong likelihood of revolutionary changes in the radio field within the next few years. Among the new and portentous developments are the advance

of two new types of service, facsimile reproduction and television; the practical extension of the radio spectrum to include a great many new channels above the 30,000-kilocycle frequency; the insistence of private and government broadcasting stations here and abroad upon drastic increases in power; the rush of American newspapers into radio; and the persistent demand of educational, governmental, public service, and political interests for a larger share of time on the radio log.

While many of the problems created by these developments are mainly technical or commercial, nearly all affect either directly or indirectly the character of radio communication, and hence the potentialities of radio as an instrument for informing and influencing the public mind. The Federal Communications Commission has recently held two public hearings at which some of the implications of the new developments cited above have been explored. These hearings were essentially fact-finding, with the actual formulation of new policies and regulations postponed until all the evidence has been presented and there has been time for deliberation on the issues and interests involved. On the basis of testimony produced at these hearings and elsewhere, it is possible to make a tentative estimate of the nature and importance of new developments, as well as to suggest

several ways in which these developments may affect the attitude-forming phase of radio communication.

The purposes of the hearings, which began on June 15, 1936, were defined by the chairman of the Communications Commission as follows: (1) To determine the present and future needs of the various classes of service for frequencies above 30,000 kc., with a view toward ultimately allocating such frequencies to services; (2) To secure for the public and the Commission a keener insight into the conflicting problems which confront the industry and the regulatory body in the application of the new frequencies to the service of the public; (3) To guide experimentation along more definite lines as may be justified from the evidence presented at the hearing; (4) To review present frequency allocations to services in the radio spectrum below 30,000 kc.; and (5) To assist the government in its preparation for the International Telecommunications Conference at Cairo in 1938.

With such a wide range of subject matter, the hearings necessarily produced a maze of conflicting evidence and demands. For instance, general and specific demands for channels both above and below the 30,000-kilocycle frequency ran between five and ten times the number of bands available in the spectrum. Of particular interest in connection with the possible change in character of

press and radio services was the evidence offered in respect to television and facsimile.

Television is successful under experimental conditions, but there is general agreement in the radio industry that it will not be ready for general exploitation for several years. In addition to technical difficulties, and the strong possibility of legal obstructions regarding patents, television also raises grave problems as to the dislocations it may cause in the radio and other industries. Although the general use of television is still in the future, there is already evidence of jockeying among various groups to attain favorable positions for the successful exploitation of the new means of communication. Especially concerned are broadcasting companies, radio-equipment manufacturers, motion picture producers and exhibitors, and newspaper publishers. The interest in television, for instance, of the Radio Corporation of America, with its interlocking participation in motion pictures (Radio-Keith-Orpheum) and broadcasting (National Broadcasting Company), raises questions of ownership and control of wide public concern. The interlocking interests of the American Telephone and Telegraph Company represent a similar problem of control. The American press has not yet shown great interest in the competitive threat of television, although it has, since the

June FCC hearings, more than tripled its licenses in the high-frequency bands, where television licenses are apt to be allocated.

*Facsimile.* Of more immediate importance is facsimile reproduction, which is said now to be practical for general use within horizon distances. As long ago as September 1935, RCA was reported as offering New York publishers the promotion of facsimile transmission of a 36-page, 8x11 newspaper to be published during each 24-hour period. Publication was to consist of placing in 25,000 homes a facsimile receiver which would cost the subscriber \$8 a month and the newspaper \$3, revenues to be derived from the sale of advertising. The Transradio Press Service has recently announced itself as prepared to distribute facsimile transmitting and receiving apparatus to both newspapers and radio stations, presumably at lower cost.

In spite of the availability of facsimile, little has been done during the last six months to put it into service. One reason for delay is the lack of sponsorship, and uncertainty as to what kind of business should undertake it. Logically, publication of facsimile newspapers might seem to be a function of the daily-newspaper industry, but newspaper publishers are reluctant to enter the field. One reason why publishers remain aloof is that they don't wish to launch a new and expensive type of competitive

publishing which would in part duplicate and parallel their already efficient circulation systems. Another reason is that present facsimile equipment is not designed to transmit beyond the horizon, which means that the potential circulation area of facsimile is definitely limited. Thirdly, facsimile does not yet offer possibilities for attractive display of either news or advertising. Fourthly, newspapers wish to avoid falling under the regulatory supervision of the FCC, freedom from the licensing powers of which they have persistently cited as one of the newspaper's advantages over the radio in the publication of news, opinion, and advertising. Lastly, up to last summer, insufficient facsimile allocations had been made by the FCC to warrant fears of serious competition from facsimile. Nevertheless, newspapers have rapidly increased their radio interests, with more than 170 broadcasting stations now owned either in whole or in part by newspapers, and with a considerable number of licenses for the use of experimental bands above 30,000 kilocycles also in newspaper hands. It is apparent that newspaper publishers, after failing to stop radio competition in news and advertising, have reversed their position and decided to enter the radio field on a large scale, and they doubtless feel equipped now to meet facsimile competition with facsimile transmission of their own, if and

when this new form of publication comes into general use.

The June FCC hearings brought forth a number of demands for allocation of channels for experimental facsimile broadcasting, both in the high frequency bands, and for mid-night-to-6:00 a.m. transmission in the standard broadcast bands. On September 15 the FCC recognized these demands by making available for facsimile a number of frequencies in the television band, and further specified that if experimentation could not be carried forward on these frequencies, other frequencies under FCC jurisdiction might be assigned, provided a sufficient need were shown. This rule seems to adumbrate the use of regular broadcast channels for facsimile, particularly between mid-night and morning, when most stations are silent. If advantage is taken of the FCC ruling, there is the immediate possibility of publishing a facsimile morning newspaper which would be waiting in the facsimile receiver in the private home when the owner of the set gets up for breakfast.

Such a development would create new problems of public policy, the number and nature of which may now be only dimly foreseen. One of these problems would undoubtedly be the extent of newspaper participation to be permitted in this form of publishing, and, conversely, the extent to which other interests, not

related to the daily-newspaper publishing industry, would be allowed to develop services of news and opinion competing with the press. Important, too, is the amount of control which would be exercised by the government regulatory body over facsimile news. Drastic changes in the function and content of both newspapers and aural and visual radio news are within the realm of possibility.

*Radio Armament Race.* The reallocation hearings which began before the FCC on October 5 were marked by a clash between a group of clear-channel broadcasting stations, including several owned by newspapers, and a group of regional stations. The question at issue was the use of superpower. In brief, a number of clear-channel stations wish to boost their power from 50,000 to 500,000 watts (even 1,000,000 watts was advocated by one spokesman) to build up listener fields of more national scope. At the present time WLW, Cincinnati, is the only 500,000-watt commercial broadcasting station in the United States. While the issue is for the moment mainly a commercial one, with regional stations fearing that superpower will cut into their advertising revenues, questions of broad social significance are also involved. There is the question, for instance, of whether superpower would move radio broadcasting still

further in the direction of monopoly, with the attendant possibility of greater government control. Again, would superpower eliminate smaller stations and thereby reduce the number of channels through which minority groups and opinions, and educational agencies, may find voice over the air? Would it be a move in the direction of further standardization of opinion, or would this tendency be counteracted by the maintenance of a large number of low-power local stations serving the town or community?

The question of superpower has its international aspect. A race for superpower is at the moment in progress in Europe, apparently for the purpose of reaching listeners across national frontiers. Approximately 200 new broadcasting transmitters are in process of construction. The number of 100,000-watt long-wave stations is to increase this year from 26 to 44, and the number of stations using more than 50,000 but less than 100,000 watts will rise from 46 to 64. Italy and France are each building two new 120,000-watt stations, and France is also constructing a 200,000-watt station to replace Radio-Paris. In the short-wave field, France, Germany, and England are especially active. France is building four transmitters with 100,000 watts power, and Germany is completing four powerful stations, as well as a



reported mysterious superpower  
Deutschland sender.

This radio expansion will offer a serious problem at the Cairo conference in 1938. Propaganda dangers as well as technical maladjustments have been written into history since the Madrid conference of 1932. So far as the United States is concerned, advocates of superpower claim that directional antennas of coast stations will prevent international complica-

tions, although they do not explain how they will prevent radio impulses from spraying American continental neighbors on the north and south. Radio problems, if they are coped with at all, must be coped with by international concert, with the realization that virtually all nations are now embarked upon radio expansion programs almost without limit.

O. W. R.

# PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

HARWOOD L. CHILDS, Editor

This department will report on activities, developments, and trends in the fields of advertising, public relations and fund-raising. In response to the current need for more effective opinion leadership there now exist professional groups of specialists, skilled in the art of opinion management. Special attention will be given to reports and studies of their techniques, and to their own exposition of public opinion trends and problems.

## PUBLIC OPINION, THE DEPRESSION, AND FUND-RAISING

A leading university president once wrote to a wealthy man and asked him for a subscription to his School of Architecture. He received the following reply: "I don't give a damn for the School of Architecture, but the President of Blank University ought not to write a letter for less than one hundred dollars and I enclose a check for that amount." The donor had such a high opinion of the university and its president that it overcame his lack of interest in any one department.

No enterprise is more dependent upon a favorable public opinion than that of raising large philanthropic funds. And to provide a background for a brief discussion of the influence of recent public opinion on fund-raising, let us glance at the short history of this new profession. Although a few large funds

had been raised before 1917, the war saw the beginning of the so-called "campaign." The Red Cross, Liberty Loan, and "war work" organizations, adopting a technique employed by local Y.M.C.A. "drives," raised billions in the months before the Armistice. Then came the post-war "drives" when colleges, universities, churches, and hospitals obtained, with comparative ease, sums of money of which they had hardly dared dream before the war.

Among the universities Harvard led the way in 1919 with a fund of nearly \$14,000,000 to increase professors' salaries. Public opinion proved favorable and hundreds of institutions followed in Harvard's wake. Mr. John D. Rockefeller gave impetus to this movement by a gift of some \$50,000,000 through the General Education Board for use in assisting colleges and universities to raise funds for increasing teachers' salaries. He gave \$20,000,000 more for cooperation in the improvement of medical schools.

*Golden Age.* The decade from 1919 to 1929 was the golden age of fund-raising—the greatest era of voluntary giving any nation has ever witnessed. The period since then has been “the seven lean years.” Figures bear out this statement. I refer here to higher education because in that field accurate statistics are available. In the 1919-29 period the privately endowed colleges and universities received in endowment and building funds about \$1,250,000,000. The Federal government gives a figure of \$1,381,000,000 as the increase in wealth of these institutions for the same period.

We have no comparable figure for the next seven years, but studies conducted by the John Price Jones Corporation show that whereas 46 leading colleges and universities received a total of \$77,867,380 in gifts and bequests for the year ending June 30, 1930, the same institutions received from the same sources only \$31,083,828 for the year ending June 30, 1935. These figures, from only one section, illustrate the extent of the recent deflation throughout the whole field of American philanthropy.

What caused this tremendous drop in the gifts of the American public? There were two major causes—both new since 1928—one economic and the other political. And public opinion is closely involved in both.

*New Factors.* The chief causes of the decrease in giving within recent years are the drop in individual incomes and the shrinkage of security values. People simply do not have the money to give as they did in the '20's. Anyone familiar with philanthropy knows all too well the drastic reduction in benefactions which followed the break in security values. But these economic factors have not always acted directly. From them has sprung a public opinion with many ramifications.

One effect of the economic collapse is that donors are giving what they have to give much more critically, more thoughtfully, and with greater discrimination. The remarkable growth of the community-chest idea shows that public opinion favors consolidation of social welfare service, elimination of duplication both in service and appeals, and economy in administration. At this point the depression has brought only social gain, for in places our private social welfare structure was topheavy.

Another effect is that, with the assumption by the Federal government of numerous social services, one of the first questions is “Why doesn't the government do it?” Public opinion is united in its insistence on being shown a real need and that the task is outside of the government welfare program.

Another effect, and perhaps today the most potent, is the tax burden. Few except the wealthy realize the threat to private philanthropy from this source. Even today the Federal and New York State estate taxes will in a normal case reduce an estate of \$10,000,000 in two transfers to less than \$3,000,000. The late Jesse I. Straus cancelled 16 philanthropic bequests for some \$878,000, pointing out that "increased estate taxes . . . are devoted in large part to governmental social programs." The estate of the late Senator Couzens, estimated at \$30,000,000, will, it is reported, be reduced by taxes to \$11,500,000. Federal estate taxes on a net estate of \$100,000 have risen according to the following table:

Tax in 1926.....	\$1,500
Tax in 1932.....	5,000
Tax in 1934.....	5,600
Tax in 1935.....	9,600

A man of even moderate means, contemplating this table, is constrained to curb his philanthropic impulse. Further, he realizes that with a mounting public debt these taxes are not likely to decrease. A public which even reluctantly accepts high income and estate taxes, is forced, just as reluctantly perhaps, to make drastic cuts in its philanthropic gifts.

*Political Factors.* With the development of economic uncertainty a number of political factors have sprung up which have profoundly

influenced public opinion. Some of this opinion has had severe repercussions on raising money.

The most far-reaching political factor has been the rapid growth of the belief in a more equitable distribution of wealth. Starting in Europe, developing in Scandinavia, widely accepted in England, certain advanced social theories were embraced and made into law in this country under the New Deal. Recent evidence is that public opinion approves this movement and that it may develop even further in the search for the "more abundant life."

The result of this major development in public opinion is that some of the present objects of private philanthropy are being threatened. We hear it rumored that they may become socialized or even superseded by governmental agencies.

The trend of public opinion seems to be in that direction. *The New York Times* recently pointed to the time not far distant when "we realize that the large and generous days of philanthropy are over and that a paternal government must take up the burden that millionaires have laid down." While no one can now say how far this social movement will continue, it has already gone a long way and has acutely affected private giving.

This statement applies particularly to higher education. A considerable number of people of influence

and intelligence have developed a critical and, in some cases, a hostile attitude toward higher education in general and toward certain universities in particular. Liberal or radical faculty members, especially those associated with New Deal policies, have irritated anti-New Deal alumni. Thus universities have become the subject of controversy with harmful results to their attempts to raise funds. Nowhere is this issue in public opinion more clearly stated than by one of the ablest members of a leading university governing board who writes:

During the next generation what trouble there is will occur on the social-science front. The whole world is changing its social and political institutions. It is going to keep on doing it and nobody can arrest the process. The result is that all discussion of political economy, sociology, constitutional law and social philosophy is likely, at almost any point and almost any moment, to get involved in issues about which people are divided and hotly divided. Are the universities for the sake of avoiding criticism and living in an unperturbed atmosphere, to refrain from wrestling with these hot modern social and political questions? If they do, then they will drift out of the main current of modern civilization. Their function of intellectual leadership will pass to the newspapers and the radio or what not. But if they are to take part, and we hope in the long run to be helpful, then it is absolutely certain that some of their professors and some of their graduates and undergraduates will be constantly giving violent offense to one strong element in the public or another.

That some "offense" has already been given is shown by the following recent statement of a Chicago business man who was interviewed in a public-opinion survey for a leading institution:

Ten years ago, the problem colleges and universities faced in fund-raising was confined chiefly to finding out where the money was and presenting a convincing statement of their needs to prospective givers. Today you have a problem of selling the prospect that colleges and universities in general are deserving of support.

*Old Principles Still Hold.* But despite these new and sobering factors, there are many reasons to believe that public opinion will continue to support those institutions which deserve support. Perhaps the wisest and most significant words spoken at the recent Harvard Tercentenary Celebration were those of President Lowell when he said: "... human institutions have rarely been killed while they retain vitality. They commit suicide or die from lack of vigor, and the adversary comes and buries them. So long as an institution conduces to human welfare . . . nothing can prevent its going on to greater prosperity."

The deep-rooted American instinct to give to and work for those good causes close to one's heart will not die easily. As Daniel Webster said of Dartmouth before the Supreme Court: "It is . . . a small college and yet there are those who



love it." Throughout America there are innumerable colleges, hospitals, churches, schools, clubs and fraternities whose friends love them and will not see them die.

My own belief is that so long as our present form of democratic government continues, private philanthropy will survive, though it may take a different form. As President Butler predicted in 1933 regarding Columbia, the days of large gifts may be gradually disappearing, although the evidence of the \$2,000,000 Littauer gift to Harvard, the \$7,000,000 Deering Bequest to Northwestern and the £1,350,000 gift to Oxford from Lord Nuffield is on the other side. It is worth noting that this last donation is the largest single gift ever made by an individual to any British university.

As President Butler said, institutions may soon have to depend on "thousands and tens of thousands of small contributions." In the depression of the early '20's, I was repeatedly told that the days of large-scale philanthropy were at an end. And only two or three years later we were in the midst of the greatest giving era America has ever seen. Today in this country government is essentially organized public opinion. So long as that public opinion is free to express itself I have confidence that it will favor private philanthropy. The present tax laws do that to a notable degree. But if

our institutions are to keep pace with a rapidly changing world and survive government competition, they must utilize the well-proved principles of modern publicity and fund-raising which have stood up throughout the recent crisis.

Many of our schools, colleges, welfare agencies, universities and churches are suffering today from a lack of understanding of their services on the part of potential supporters. There is need for many of them to consider carefully improving their relation to the public whose favorable opinion is essential. Many of the more far-sighted are earnestly at work on that very task.

As a result of recent profound economic and political disturbances, public opinion toward fund-raising has recently shown the following trends:

1. A critical attitude toward all objectives, with a greater degree of thought and discrimination in giving.
2. Immediate inquiry as to the government's relation to the objectives, as typified in the question "Why doesn't the government do it?"
3. An acute appreciation of the tax burden with the natural necessity of curbing gifts to all philanthropy.
4. With the spread of advanced social theories, many of them imported, a belief that gradually many of our present social and educational agencies will be taken over by the Federal government.
5. Particularly in the field of higher education a critical, and sometimes a hostile attitude caused by the political activities of faculty members.

These new trends have in turn had their effect on fund-raising technique. The obstacles noted are being met. The major moves in that direction are the following:

1. The appeal or "reason why" must be much stronger and more intelligently presented than in the past. In meeting the present intense competition for the country's philanthropic fund, the appeal must stand up against a barrage of questions seldom heard in 1929.

2. Large-scale fund-raising is a much more serious business than formerly. Such obstacles in public opinion as political animosity, increasing taxes, and the spread of social legislation, must be overcome. As a result the effort must be thoroughly organized along scientific lines. Unless this is done and the well-proved principles of modern fund-raising employed, disaster is likely and disappointment certain.

3. As a result of these forces the fund-raising business has rapidly developed from the hit-and-miss methods of the early '20's to an established profession possessing a substantial body of knowledge. And one of the fundamental requirements for success in that profession is a wide knowledge and deep appreciation of public opinion and its primary position in our national life.

JOHN PRICE JONES  
*President, John Price Jones  
Corporation, New York City*

## RECENT TRENDS IN PUBLIC RELATIONS ACTIVITIES

The public relations profession enlarged its activities throughout the great depression, because business

realized that in addition to selling its products under unfavorable conditions it needed also to sell itself to the public, to explain its contribution to the entire economic system. Business recognized that if it did not do this, conflicting ideas might abolish or modify business itself. Then, too, the increasing attention given by universities, publicists and writers to the importance of sound public relations in the maintenance of our system of free enterprise made business aware of the need for modifying its attitudes and actions to conform to public demands, as well as for getting the public to understand its position.

Previous to the depression, the public relations activities of industry were, to a large extent, confined to trade associations and the larger corporations. Trade associations which had specific problems of public relations—competition, taxes, sales difficulties—called in the expert on public opinion. The coal, the meat, the oil industries were cases in point.

There was the tax problem, for instance—chain stores were faced by a wave of special taxes. And there were problems of markets, such as maintaining and developing markets for artificial flowers, concrete roads, velvets, or citrus fruits. Competing products such as coal vs. oil, steel vs. wood, vegetable fat vs. animal fat, utilized public relations methods to make clear to the public the advan-

tage of one over the other product. The public relations activities of large corporations were of the same general character. Large corporations were faced with maintaining and developing leadership in their fields. They often used public relations techniques to develop members of their own organizations as symbols of leadership. In industry these two broad fields of action kept the public relations men busy, either as professional advisers, on the outside, or as officers within the corporation or trade association, charged with public relations activities.

Then came the depression and deflation. For a time there was little attempt to grapple with the new conditions. Neither steel nor wood, coal nor oil, velvet nor silk, thought there were markets worth fighting for on the old basis of important cooperative effort in public relations. The deflation of stocks, bonds, and general values caused a recession of trade-association public relations activities. While the efforts of trade associations in public relations activities languished, the large corporations realigned their policies and efforts. They were faced with entirely new conditions in the market. They needed experts who could keep them constantly informed as to the new demands of the public. Corporations and leaders had lost prestige simultaneously. From a market standpoint, the public was keenly sensi-

tive, because of its feeling of insecurity, to everything about a corporation that it did not understand. Companies were exposed on all sides to attacks from the most unexpected quarters. Not only had many leaders lost their prestige with the public, but product sales fell off for the most improbable and unlikely reasons, as for instance false rumors that X company was inimical to Catholics, Jews, or Protestants. Or the false rumors might be that the product was short-weight, or the owners were Fascist or anti-Fascist. No possible subject that could be a matter of disagreement between two groups of the public was too trivial to cause a wave of public disapproval or a falling off in buying. The public relations counsel was called in at all hours of the day or night to rush to the fire and put out what might well have spread into a disastrous conflagration.

Advising and aiding in the rebuilding of established reputations which had been blasted, and attempting to develop new reputations, were greatly important tasks of the period. The day of the straw man and the stuffed shirt was over. America no longer wanted clay idols. It wanted real heroes, who kept pace with the changed times and anticipated changed conditions by changing policies and actions in advance of public pressure or law—men who recognized *that private business is a public*

*trust*. In the field of politics straw men did appear on the horizon, but in business and industry leaders had to be made of sterner stuff.

Trade associations came back, too, not only in the previous fields of action, but mainly in connection with their relationship to government. The NRA created numerous public relations problems for a number of industries.

Industry also woke up and recognized that the Huey Longs, Coughlins, Townsends, Sinclairs, and others who flooded America with economic and other "isms," might really be undermining the basis of our economic system. They began to realize that they had neglected many important phases of their own existence, as for example:

1. The importance of always adhering to the principle that, to survive, private business must always be in the public interest.
2. That the public interest is a changing concept and business must change with it.
3. That the place of business in the American system must be sold to the public.
4. That public relations techniques can help to do this.

The trade association has come back not only with a recognition of its specific problems, but with a recognition of these broader problems. It has recognized that it must serve the interest of the public. It is recognizing that it is not enough to do lip service to the principles of Adam

Smith. It is necessary to modify policies and acts—for instance, on wages, on labor. Great trade associations are dealing with these problems. Reactionary members in an industry are not aware that the world has changed. Liberal members must convince them.

This period, too, saw the development of campaigns by large aggregations of industry to attempt to rationalize and integrate business into the thinking of the American people. The United States Chamber of Commerce, through the *Nation's Business*, edited by Merle Thorpe, has carried on important public relations activities. The National Association of Manufacturers, under Colby Chester, has striven aggressively in many different ways along many fronts, attempting to rationalize industry to the public.

Large corporations have expanded their public relations activities. The United States Steel Corporation, for instance, under the aegis of Edward R. Stettinius, Jr., appointed J. Carlisle MacDonald, as its public relations officer. John Wiley Hill became the public relations officer of the American Iron and Steel Institute; Merle Crowell, the public relations officer for the Rockefeller Center interests; Arthur Page widened his sphere of usefulness for the American Telephone and Telegraph Company; Paul Garrett enlarged his field of activities for General Motors

Corporation; Ivy Lee, Jr., and T. J. Ross carried on for the Pennsylvania Railroad; Northrop Clarey did public relations work for Standard Oil of New Jersey; and R. Gordon Wasson for J. P. Morgan and Company.

Outside influences helped to further this growing recognition that industry's intelligent planning of its relationship with the public is an important part of management's duty. The problem of public relations, with reference to propaganda, was made the basis of a discussion at a meeting of the American Political Science Association in December 1934. The American Academy of Political and Social Science devoted itself to a study of propaganda and pressure groups in 1935. The *Herald Tribune* Institute, under Mrs. William Brown Meloney, in 1935 devoted one of its important sessions to the subject of propaganda. Bruce Barton only recently delivered an important speech on the subject at a convention of business men, which was widely reprinted and commented upon. Several large universities took up the subject at institutes. The University of Virginia, at its Institute on Public Affairs in 1936 devoted a session to the subject. Bucknell University, under the direction of Professor Harwood L. Childs of Princeton did likewise. Then the Boston Conference on Distribution covered the subject of public rela-

tions thoroughly, when Daniel Bloomfield, its director, had leading speakers in the field go into the matter last fall.

Dr. George Gallup, in his American Institute of Public Opinion, Archibald Crossley, and others, drew attention to the techniques of measuring public opinion in the national political campaign, and, of course, the activities of Charles Michelson, as director of publicity of the Democratic National Committee, focused further interest on the strategies of working with public opinion. All of these elements had an important effect on the mind of business. The lay, the financial and the trade press carried on the discussion. The *Atlantic Monthly*, the *Financial World*, *Today*, *Business Week*, *Tide*, *Nation's Business*, and other magazines presented articles discussing what only a few years ago would scarcely have been touched upon. Meetings of executives in fields as diversified as railroads, banks, and gelatine, devoted themselves to the subject. And only recently Dean Carl Ackerman, of the Columbia University School of Journalism, proposed a Public Opinion Foundation.

Business in America is no longer merely private business—it is individual enterprise devoted to public business, and the sooner American business appreciates that fact, the better. Nor is business a self-perpetuating function, as some business men



seem to think it is—with practices and rites that must be maintained, merely because they have always been maintained before. Business cannot survive and grow on an emotional credo. It must be based on the soundest logical foundation, based on public interest, convenience, and necessity.

This thought is fundamental to any sound public relations approach. American industry, taking the view that its interests and the public in-

terest coincide, recognizes that intelligently planned actions that conform to these interests are basic to its continued existence. And American industry today is devoting more of its time and energies to the carrying out of policies which recognize public relations activities as one of the basic and most important factors in management.

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## BOOK REVIEWS

WANDERSCHECK, HERMANN, *Weltkrieg und Propaganda*. Berlin: Mittler & Son, 1936. 260 pp.

GRATTAN, C. HARTLEY, *Preface to Chaos*. New York: Dodge Publishing Company, 1936. 341 pp. (\$3.00)

KNIGHT, BRUCE WINTON, *How to Run a War*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 243 pp. (\$2.00)

Dr. Wanderscheck's book is restricted to English propaganda during the World War. It is based upon diligent study of the literature and of the documents. In 1935 Wanderscheck published a *Bibliographie zur englischen Propaganda im Weltkrieg* (*Bibliographische Vierteljahrshefte der Weltkriegsbücherei*, Heft 7). He has had access to the admirable documents housed at Castle Rosenstein, Stuttgart.

Two-thirds of the volume deals with English propaganda before Northcliffe. The final third traces the history under Northcliffe and

adds an appraisal of Northcliffe's personality. The symbols of the pre-Northcliffe propaganda are divided as follows: England's mission, anti-German culture, anti-Hohenzollern, atrocity propaganda, front propaganda.

The monograph gives less novel material than is found in Dr. Thimme's *Weltkrieg Ohne Waffen*, and there is no contribution to methods of propaganda research. No original interpretations appear. But there is a commendable combination of careful scholarship and judicious judgment.

It would be profitable to extend the range of current studies of war propaganda in at least two directions. One would undertake to exhibit in systematic fashion the connection between the symbols invoked in war propaganda, and the symbols prevailing in the years before the war. How were the "favorable" aspects of the future enemy redefined

when the crisis arose? How were the "unfavorable" aspects handled? Which features of the former picture were wholly neglected, or left untouched? Dr. Thimme has been especially fertile in suggesting relationships between British propaganda and the wider context of British culture and British attitudes on the eve of conflict. "War aims" and "atrocities" change significant details of their pattern from place to place, and these changes can be brought into intelligible relationship to the context.

Another direction would be toward intensifying the evidence of "results." More detailed data about desertions, about letters home from the front, about infractions of discipline, would be welcomed by every specialist.

In sharp contrast to the orientation of Dr. Wanderscheck's work are the books by Grattan and Knight. Grattan's thesis is that "the forces making for war are stronger in the world today than the forces making for peace." He believes that we are passing toward communism, though not necessarily toward incorporation in the Soviet Union. He does not believe that the new world war will mean the end of all civilization, only of capitalistic civilization. Hence, despite the "Chaos" in the title of the book, Grattan sings a reassuring

tenor where H. G. Wells chants a gloomy bass.

Since Grattan does not undertake to forecast the future of propaganda in detail, there is not much in the volume that bears directly on the technical side of the subject. But a more cogent and detailed statement of the present position of the United States in world affairs is to be found nowhere else.

An exciting experiment in propaganda is the spirited little book by Professor Knight, who teaches economics at Dartmouth. With brevity, irony, and authority, he says what there is to say about the ways and means of waging war. He addresses the moneyed class which, since it avowedly has the biggest stake in the country and the biggest stake in the war, ought to see how to do what it is going to do. Specialists on the management of public opinion will no doubt have time to develop an acceptable synonym for Chapter 3, "How to Lie For Your Country." In the busy lives of the big-money class, reading is at a minimum: Mr. Knight would be well advised to prepare a mimeographed summary of his volume, labelled "Strictly Confidential," and put the distribution in the hands of "Consolidated Patriots, Incorporated."

HAROLD D. LASSWELL  
*University of Chicago*

MILLER, JOHN C., *Sam Adams, Pioneer in Propaganda*. Boston: Little Brown & Company, 1936. 437 pp. (\$4.00)

This new biography of Samuel Adams is, in many respects, an able piece of work. It avoids, on the one hand, the adulation of Wells's account and, on the other, the spurious psychoanalysis of Harlow's study. Grounded on a laborious examination of the original sources, it assesses anew the rôle of the most interesting of those disaffected colonists who helped to push British America into the Revolution. Despite the author's conscientious efforts, however, Adams never quite comes to life. This is partly a result of Miller's failure to sense those personal traits of Adams which enabled him through thick and thin to command the loyalty of a devoted band of followers, and partly of the author's eagerness to claim too much for one man's agency in a complex and variously motivated social movement.

Somewhere Miller remarks, "Adams always saw Tories at the bottom of any mischief and he held them responsible for evils in which they had no hand." It might similarly be observed that Miller always sees Adams at the bottom of any mischief directed against the British government and holds him responsible whether his hand was in it or not. The fact is that Boston teemed with malcontents "fit for treason,

stratagems, and spoils," some of whom on occasion outstripped Adams in radical zeal. Of the activities of such men as Thomas Young, Isaiah Thomas, Joseph Greenleaf, Josiah Quincy, and Joseph Hawley, Adams can in no proper sense be considered the instigator. The author's error of emphasis probably stems from an uncritical reading of loyalist sources, on which he strongly relies. To certain of his political foes Adams personified all the diverse forces which were strewing thorns and boulders in their path.

Where Miller departs from older interpretations of Adams's motives he is apt to be unconvincing. Take, for example, his insistence that Adams desired independence in order that "Puritanism might flourish again as it had in the early seventeenth century." As a virtuoso of propaganda, Adams naturally appealed to this sentiment as he did to a variety of other emotions. If a restored Puritanism were really his goal, however, one wonders why he so eagerly joined forces with radicals like William Molineux, who went "neither to Mass, Church, nor Meeting," and Thomas Young, a militant deist. Nor, if the author is correct, is it explicable why Adams in his declining years was an ardent enthusiast for the French Revolution with its emphasis on infidelity.

As an expounder of Adams's propaganda technique the author is least

satisfactory in treating his manipulation of the press. Miller nowhere explains the line-up of the newspapers in Boston, nor does he make clear that the organization of a favorable press was a constant preoccupation of both sides of the controversy. Even Adams's use of many different journalistic pseudonyms is passed over in silence, though its evident purpose was to create the impression that this single contributor was a whole band of scribblers. In dealing with what he miscalls the *Journal of Events* Miller ascribes to Adams this outstanding example of syndicated propaganda, notwithstanding the fact that the most careful research has thus far failed to establish its authorship and that Miller himself offers no proof for his attribution. Here, as elsewhere, he solves all difficulties by giving the credit, or blame, to the subject of his biography. Finally, a proper appraisal of the intercolonial situation in the period of lull, 1771-1773, shows the falsity of the statement: "If one colony took a step upon the slippery path of revolution, the Sons of Liberty in the other provinces immediately prepared to follow lest they be suspected of backwardness. . . ." In reality, the constant problem of the Boston radicals during those years was to prod kindred groups in other colonies to active protest. And for two years such efforts failed dismally.

In general, the volume is well written, but there are occasional lapses, as when the author denominates a single-chamber legislature a "unilateral legislature."

ARTHUR M. SCHLESINGER  
*Harvard University*

CASE, LYNN M., *French Opinion on the United States and Mexico, 1860-1867*, Extracts from the Reports of the Procureurs Généraux. New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, 1936. 452 pp. (\$7.00)

Prepared and published under the direction of the American Historical Association, this volume is the fifth to appear in the series designed as a memorial to the statesman and historian, Albert J. Beveridge. Like the preceding volumes, this one brings to our attention a collection of highly important source material hitherto unpublished or not readily available. From the quarterly confidential reports of the *procureurs généraux*, in the twenty-eight judicial districts of France, to the minister of justice, Professor Case has extracted and edited those sections that record local attitudes and opinions toward the Civil War and Napoleon III's Mexican expedition. On occasion, digests of these reports on specific issues were prepared for the Emperor, and considerable reliance appears to have been placed upon them for an objective picture of sen-



timent in the country. With justice the editor insists upon the value of these reports as an accurate index of contemporary opinions in the various localities as over against the periodical and newspaper press which, with the exception of Liberal journals, was largely an instrument in the hands of the authorities for publicizing official views and inculcating the desired political attitudes. While such a press is disqualified as a reflector of opinions held by the various publics it may be all the more important, particularly under an authoritarian régime, for the study of official policies and governmental publicity techniques.

"What effect do the principal events of each quarter produce on the different classes?" was the question put to the *procureurs généraux* in the confidential circular of March 11, 1859, which extended the scope of their activity. The range of subjects was broad, embracing practically all matters of social, economic, and political import both foreign and domestic. Information on economic conditions occupied a prominent place in these reports, and the first section of the edited extracts made available in this volume deals with the dislocations of French industry and commerce produced by the Civil War. It was not alone "King Cotton" that was involved but the entire range of French export industries which had im-

portant markets in the United States.

From the influence of the war upon French economic life, which is the subject of Part I, the editor proceeds to give in Part II the *procureurs'* reports on local attitudes toward questions of intervention, neutrality and blockade, Lincoln's reelection, the close of the war, and the problems of reconstruction. In Part III is presented the *procureurs'* reports on local opinions and attitudes toward the Emperor's Mexican expedition from the beginning of joint intervention through the establishment of the Mexican Empire under Maximilian, to the withdrawal of French troops, and the tragic dénouement. Although the Mexican expedition was an expression of the Emperor's personal policy, the *procureurs* did not hesitate to report the consistently adverse attitudes assumed by the populace toward this imperial adventure.

Altogether commendable is the manner in which Professor Case has discharged his editorial functions. Besides the general introduction, each section is provided with an introductory note which affords a connected narrative of events paralleling the *procureurs'* reports. Further, the official accounts are briefly summarized, their trend indicated, and the points of agreement and disagreement pointed out with reference to such published narratives as

Owsley's *King Cotton Diplomacy* and West's *Contemporary French Opinion of the American Civil War*. An adequate, but not burdensome, system of explanatory footnotes and cross-references accompanies the French text of the *procureurs'* reports. This volume should interest not only historians who accept Professor Beard's broad definition of history as "contemporary thought about past actuality," but also social scientists who employ the historical method of approach to problems of international economics, civil administration, and the knotty problem of political motivation and behavior.

ORON JAMES HALE  
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ROSS, ISHBEL, *Ladies of the Press*.  
New York: Harper & Brothers,  
1936. 622 pp. (\$3.75)

An analysis of the long-time trend in journalism is important to the understanding of our own period.

*Ladies of the Press* by Ishbel Ross presents a comprehensive factual picture of the place of women in journalism in the reporting and interpretation of the contemporary scene. Further than this, the book presents by implication a study of the progress of the entire feminist movement that started in the era of Havelock Ellis and Max Nordau. A quarter of a century is summed up in this book, and the conclusions drawn by

the author present a mature judgment in contrast to the early enthusiasms of the pioneers in the woman's movement.

Miss Ross, having examined the careers of hundreds of women engaged in newspaper work in America, states unequivocally that although their numbers have increased from year to year, while they have achieved general success, while special fields are represented by outstanding women, nevertheless, certain obstacles in the journalistic field have not yet been overcome.

Possibly Miss Ross's discouragement represents a certain swing of the pendulum. It may be, however, that her viewpoint is special, and that her opinion is not representative of the majority of women who have given study to the subject. It would seem that the general attitude of women at the present time is that their struggle for economic equality with men must be tempered by philosophy, and that all obstacles cannot be overcome in the short period of time that has been represented in this forward movement.

From a broad social standpoint, important activities are represented, and occasionally led, by women as well as men. There seems to be little evidence that women in America are abandoning their struggle to achieve success in non-domestic activities. Young women, as evidenced by in-

terests and activities in high schools and universities, show increasing determination to enter fields of public opinion, as well as thousands of other fields which were practically closed to them two decades ago.

Miss Ross's own success in the journalistic field will unquestionably stimulate the ambitions of a vast number of young women who will characteristically ignore her unenthusiastic appraisal of the value of women to the entire field of journalism.

Miss Ross's book has amassed an enormous number of facts as to the part women have played in our journalism, and as to the personality and activities of the women themselves. Within the last twenty years, she has shown that the growth of the number of women in journalism has been tremendous. One can draw conclusions as to the effect of their activity on the public psychology as a whole. They have brought woman's opinion to bear on the presentation of news facts and news comments to the readers, and this in itself must have had an important bearing on the interests of the feminine reading public.

The book is a veritable encyclopedia of names and biographical data. It deserves to be in every library where students are eager to read about journalism and woman's place in it. It provides, so far as

we know, the only compendium and Who's Who on the subject.

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NICOLL, ALLARDYCE, *Film and Theatre*. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1936. 255 pp. (\$2.50)

Here is a competent, clearly limned, and dispassionate presentation of the status and techniques of the screen and stage, treated both in common and separately.

Allardyce Nicoll is professor of the history of drama at Yale University. This volume is not, however, pervaded by any acutely academic or remotely theoretical expression. It is as devoted to the author's measure of practicalities of purpose and function of the art—or arts, as he separates them—as a text on thermodynamics.

Mr. Nicoll's book arrives at a time when it can well serve the rapidly widening interest in the technology of motion picture production, a consequence of the coming of age of the screen and its extensive and intensive involvement in human affairs. Today's trend toward the creation of individual cinema institutions behind the rising walls of nationalism does not come in for discussion and is hardly within the intended scope of the work. Mr. Nicoll does, meanwhile, take cognizance of spe-

cial, indicative, and explorative labors of the art in many lands.

The author records in his book a conviction that the film and the stage must progress to separate destinies by sharply divergent paths. It is to be observed that when he seeks examples he turns ever to the pictures and the plays which have made their marks commercially in a world of hard popular fact.

While there is broadly no special pleading, there is indeed a certain more than implied defense of the art of the screen as practised in the amusement trade. The opening chapter, with the somewhat alarming title of "Shakespeare and the Cinema," presents a quotation including: "As for the management itself, writers of scripts realized that frequently it consisted of men who, starting their careers as costumiers or pawnbrokers or money-lenders, had taken up this form of entertainment from purely commercial motives and therefore were intent only on what the box-office receipts testified to be of immediate appeal. . . ." And in dramatic fashion he reveals this to have been an early discussion of the Elizabethan stage of sacred tradition, not a comment on the much bedevilled movies.

Mr. Nicoll seems to think it is all right for both the stage and the screen to serve the popular fancy. That is fortunate, because they will,

anyway, to the best of the ability of their masters.

There is an interesting declaration, somewhat at odds with the pratings of theoretical cinema purists, that methods and means and devices of photographic trickery and any manner of optical chicane are justified by the emotional end-effect of the finished product. Mr. Nicoll's liberal attitude on this question reminds one of the remark, probably by Whistler, that he would paint with a shoebrush if it produced what he wanted.

In some of Mr. Nicoll's citations of screen treatment, he was influenced, perhaps, by the prominence which certain of our left-wing commentators have given to foreign productions, for considerations rather more political than artistic. There is a school of thought among American screen critics which esteems most highly the imported label. This is, however, not an important factor of coloration in Mr. Nicoll's work.

The historical element of the work is minor, and fortunately so, since Mr. Nicoll, with ever so many sources available, is definitely in error as to some of the origins recorded, conspicuously in ascribing the founding of the theater screen to France.

The bibliography of more than a thousand listings gives an excellent catalog of the bookshelf of the screen,

a shelf which unhappily accommodates an amazing amount of incompetent and biased literature. *Film and Theatre* is one of the painfully few volumes worthy of a permanent place on the lengthening shelf.

TERRY RAMSAYE  
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LASSWELL, HAROLD D.; CASEY, RALPH D.; and SMITH, BRUCE L. *Propaganda and Promotional Activities: an Annotated Bibliography*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1935. 450 pp. (\$3.50)

Propaganda as the deliberate promotion of ideas and attitudes by special-interest groups aiming to influence political opinions or the buying habits of consumers, or to bring about popular support for various reforms, has been growing apace during the past two decades. It is only natural that social scientists, journalists, and psychologists should turn their attention to an investigation of how this "symbol manipulation" takes place. In other words, if propaganda today is a conscious effort to sway men's minds, the scientific analysis of such practices represents an objective interest in understanding how the whole matter works out and in raising problems as to its moral significance in the modern world.

A subcommittee of the Social Science Research Council, appointed in 1931 and known as the "Committee on Pressure Groups and Propaganda" undertook, among other tasks, the preparation of an annotated bibliography which would be useful particularly to those who wish to analyze propaganda in terms of present-day psychology and social science. The volume under review is the product of two members of the larger committee who agreed to undertake the arduous task of compiling the material. Much of the detailed work was done by Mr. Smith. The classification of the materials, however, is due chiefly to Lasswell's influence.

The citations are given under seven major "Parts" or divisions, dealing respectively with the following topics: (I) "Strategy and technique," treated largely in terms of theories of propaganda and of closely related methods of managing and analyzing "collective" responses. (II) "Propaganda classified by the name of the promoting group," for instance, promotional schemes by nations during war and peace, by political parties, and by labor, agrarian, church, and other organizations. (III) A classification in terms of "the response to be elicited," such as relate to international amity, humanitarianism, health, birth control, and prohibition. (IV) Citations which illustrate "the symbols and practices of which propaganda



makes use or to which it adapts itself, including a wide selection of material related to attitudes and symbols of groups, persons, institutions, doctrines, and of practical devices of promotion. (V) Material dealing first with the work of advertisers, press agents, lobbyists, educators, *et al.* as dispensers of propaganda, and second, with the major channels of dissemination which are employed, such as the press, the radio, the cinema, exhibits, forums, lyceums, and the schools. (VI) Selected references to articles, monographs, and books which report on various attempts to measure the effects of propaganda, chiefly by psychological tests, scales, and questionnaires, by surveys of marketing, by measurement of space used in printed media by various analyses of voting, by interviewing, and by autobiographical techniques. And (VII) a series of references on the broader implications of both propaganda and censorship in the present world. At the close of the volume there is a convenient listing of previous bibliographies on propaganda and rather full and highly useful separate indexes of subjects and of authors cited throughout.

An introductory discussion, "The Study and Practice of Propaganda" by Lasswell, serves to explain the classification of materials and also to place the whole subject of propaganda and its analysis in a systematic setting.

One final comment may be added about the organization of the materials of this volume. My own students have expressed some difficulty in using the bibliography effectively when the formulation of their own topics of study does not follow the classifications within the major divisions of this volume. Accustomed as they are to the more common bibliographies which list material by the name of some propaganda group or, more specifically, by such terms as "public utilities," "lobby," "motion pictures," "war," and the like, they have trouble in reorienting themselves to this newer schema. It will doubtless take time and effort to "educate" would-be students of propaganda to the somewhat novel conceptual framework which lies behind Parts III and IV in particular. But it is well to point out again that—as the compilers state—"the bibliography is limited, in principle, to studies, rather than illustrations of propaganda." In short, it is essentially a volume for research workers who wish to study the mechanics and practices of deliberate promotion of ideas and attitudes. It does not pretend, primarily, to furnish references to specific instances of propaganda. Such a bibliography would have required many volumes and endless industry.

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# BIBLIOGRAPHY

Compiled by BRUCE LANNES SMITH

This is a continuation of an annotated bibliography published in 1935 in book form.<sup>1</sup> To facilitate cross-referencing, the subject-matter classification used in that volume is employed here. In some sub-classes, Mr. Smith has found no important publications during the period covered by this issue of the bibliography. It has been impossible to include in this issue all entries compiled since publication of the book. References unavoidably omitted will appear in future issues.

## PART I. PROPAGANDA STRATEGY AND TECHNIQUE

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The "Dickstein Committee," which was empowered to investigate both radical and hyper-patriotic pressure groups. This committee also released a *Public Statement* in New York City, November 24, 1934 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1934. 12 pp.), and a *Report* (74th Congress, 1st session, House Report 153. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1935. 24 pp.).

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The author is a prominent China journalist, editor of the *China Yearbook*.

## **PROPAGANDA: Its Psychology and Technique**

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## PART VI. MEASURING THE EFFECTS OF PROPAGANDA

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## PART VII. PROPAGANDA AND CENSORSHIP IN MODERN SOCIETY

### A. THE BROADER IMPLICATIONS OF PROPAGANDA IN MODERN SOCIETY

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Contains maps showing where religious and patriotic teachings and ceremonies are required by law in the United States.

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